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The educational field agent; definition and analysis of a new professional role.

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THE EDUCATIONAL FIELD AGENT:
DEFINITION AND ANALYSIS OF A NEW PROFESSIONAL ROLE

A Dissertation Presented

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DEDICATION

The contents of this dissertation advocate Change;
but the love and pride I have for my wonderful
husband and children will never change.
I dedicate this work to them.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply indebted to Dr. Daniel C. Jordan, whom I not only honor as my mentor and friend, but who serves, for me, as the perfect model of the realization of man's inherent goodness and creativity. I am no less grateful to Dr. Donald T. Streets, who is consistent in his willingness to give generously of his valuable assistance, humor, and friendship.

I should like to pay a special tribute to my parents who, as only parents can, possess a faith in me that remains unswerving ..... and to Nellie, without whom I never could have done any of this.

L.A.

The Educational Field Agent: Definition and Analysis of a New Professional Role (April 1975)

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This thesis presents a case study of an experiment in the use of an Educational Field Agent to stimulate educational change in the State of Vermont. Analysis and evaluation of the specific role in Vermont illustrate the strengths and weaknesses of this new approach as a method of effecting change in education. Recommendations for future use of Field Agents are made. Data collection was carried out by the author as participant-observer using the following data sources: personnel within the organizations involved, taped interviews, correspondence, monthly reports, memoranda and feedback from State Department officials, teachers and administrators in the field, and detailed, daily logs of each experience kept by the Agent. The author-Field Agent, as staff member of a field tested, R&D Model at the University of Massachusetts (Anisa), and employee of a New England regional institution designed to improve educational quality (New England Program for Teacher Education), was 'housed' in the Vermont State Department of Education and served as a link between educational design and development resource persons and educational practitioners. A description of the

work performed in the Vermont educational system includes specific assignments undertaken, and interactions of the Field Agent with personnel at all levels of the educational hierarchy, e.g., State Department administrators, superintendents, principals, and teachers. Implications for a Field Agent, in the context of Field Agent-employer and Field Agent-field relationships, internal or external Agents, and identification with a University-based R&D Model are presented frankly and analyzed along psychological, sociological, and political dimensions. Analysis of change includes consideration of managerial and financial problems, cultural variables, communication, administrative issues, and time factors, all of which are involved in the resistance to change. On the basis of analysis of the Vermont experience, recommendations for the implementation of the role of Educational Field Agent in the United States include discussion of the need for acquisition of knowledge in the nature of change and the conditions needed for change to occur. A comparison between the concept of Agricultural Exchange Agent and the Educational Field Agent is made. Although two paradigms for change are presented by other experts, the author of this dissertation concludes that innovation in education can take place only after teacher training institutes update and improve the methods and quality of educating teachers and administrators. Establishment of consensus in educational goals and values

is cited as an important step in the creation of a receptive environment, or conditions for change. The role of the Educational Field Agent, if it is to be a viable one, must include efforts to create these conditions before new structures and functions are introduced.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The complexity of educational reform, in part, arises from the unique needs of changing communities and the apparent inadequacy of programs for teacher indoctrination into newly required methods. The resistance to change is like an inflexible thread mistakenly woven into a fabric which must assume the shape of the times. Apathetic, indecisive or impulsive educational leadership at the highest level diffuses uncertainty at each stratum of public educational institutions. The need for educational improvement is currently highlighted by a desire on the part of the community to interact with educators, by the ever growing number of teachers demanding more recognition as professionals, and by the manifest indifference of students. Such social and psychological factors widen the gap of influence towards change or the maintenance of the status quo.

It seems reasonable to assume that expansion of teacher capability and decisiveness in the face of change will be successful if this same capability and decisiveness is made manifest through the cooperation and communication of educational leadership at the highest position.

A recent experimental approach in educational reform has been the creation of the Educational Field Agent. The Field Agent provides a service for individual or group

assistance at any educational level. The purpose of this thesis is to present first hand knowledge of the development and performance of this service in the State of Vermont. The concept, origin, and perceived function of the Educational Field Agent for the State of Vermont is presented below.

A. Organizational History

The Vermont Educational Field Agent project is the direct result of a three-way agreement involving the NEW ENGLAND PROGRAM FOR TEACHER EDUCATION (NEPTE), the VERMONT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (VSDE), and the staff members of the AMERICAN NATIONAL INSTITUTES FOR SOCIAL ADVANCEMENT (Anisa Project at the University of Massachusetts). A more complete grasp of the interrelationship of NEPTE, Anisa, and the VSDE may be obtained from the historical information presented below on each of these organizations.

1. Structure of NEPTE:

The agency which conceived the Vermont Educational Field Agent Project, the NEW ENGLAND PROGRAM IN TEACHER EDUCATION (NEPTE), was created on May 1, 1970 by a resolution of the six governors of New England who were meeting as a Regional Commission. NEPTE was funded primarily by the U.S. Department of Commerce. The Regional Commission, together with the Department of Commerce, concluded that in New England, the quality of education was largely related to the provision of a potential labor force. Such a conclusion

presumed education to be a crucial, basic, economic resource. It is understandable, then, that the quality of teaching was viewed as the most critical factor in influencing the quality of education.

In addition to providing public sanction for NEPTE, the New England Regional Commission provided on-going financial support in the form of over two million dollars. Furthermore, a technical support staff was established that developed similar programs in career education, pollution and energy.

A two year planning period preceded the organized implementation of NEPTE, involving a number of outstanding and responsible persons in New England. While, at first, the impetus was provided by a cadre of professional educators from each State, this task force proposed that the program transcend any identification with discrete States, or professionalism per se, and maintain an autonomous, non-partisan identity as a regional institution.

2. Function of NEPTE:

The goals of the program included: (a) the improvement of the quality of available pre-service and in-service teacher education; (b) the support of experimental and flexible approaches to teacher education; and, (c) the more efficient utilization of staff and school facilities. Thus, the program emerged as a collaboration of regional professionals and community representatives. As was indicated earlier, the focus for program development was on improving

teaching through innovative techniques as opposed to the traditional approach which comprises the accumulation of course credits and/or degrees. Concomitantly, a commitment was made to invest NEPTE's resources in supporting new efforts of existing agencies. The goal was to support innovativeness, not replication.

With this policy established, the 24 acting members of NEPTE's Board of Directors sent invitations to the existing regional agencies to participate and to propose projects. As a result, by the time Dr. Roland Goddu, NEPTE's Executive Director, was selected (September, 1970), 96 proposals had been received. Using a needs assessment strategy, the requests were analyzed, categorized, and modified during the first six months of the program. The NEPTE concept was thus operationalized, identifying five predominant areas in which the first year's efforts would be directed:

1) needs assessment; 2) information dissemination; 3) resource development projects; 4) staff development cooperative projects; and, 5) pioneering projects[1] (Goddu, Ryan, Ducharme, & Knight, 1970). NEPTE was established as a non-profit education corporation. The Board of Directors,

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[1]Dr. Goddu defines these as "projects in process of invention. They are beyond the edge of what the state of the art is [R. Goddu, personal communication, February 20, 1975]."

comprised of educators and laymen, determines the activities of the program which are specified in their contract with the New England Regional Commission.[2] There are other contractual arrangements with the additional, involved regional agencies (e.g. VSDE and Anisa) in which specified terms for activities and the exchange of funds and services are outlined. In a recent publication (Announcement, 1974), NEPTE was described as a research and development organization that provides professional services to a broad spectrum of educators and educational institutions interacting with the community's involvement.

Among the projects of NEPTE, all of which are directly responsive to learner and teacher needs, are: (a) the development of handbooks and film materials for the "School and Community Partnership Project;" (b) an education oriented newspaper, "The Common," reaching 100,000 readers; (c) "A Regional Comprehensive Learning and Teaching Network" sponsoring Anisa; (d) evaluation services; and, (e) "The New England Field Agent Project" (Announcement, 1974).

3. The Field Agent Concept:

The NEPTE Field agent concept was the synthesis of a variety of experiences related to the work done by

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[2]NEPTE went into the final phase of its contract with the New England Regional Commission in 1974. It will then become an independent organization.

Dr. Roland Goddu when he was Dean of the School of Education at Catholic University. He described current approaches to educational reform as being "systematized into little boxes," and not creating and supporting a "catalytic kind of people" (i.e., people who can energize educational change).[3] When he became Director of NEPTE, Dr. Goddu further reflected,

> One of the things I did when I took this job was to visit everyone from whom I could learn and listen. I spent three months on the road, and then I made three judgments: 1) - The key was the State Department--not anywhere else--not in the higher educational institution, not the local school systems, but the State Departments. Since every-time I asked people: 'Why don't you do that?' They said, 'I can't because it's against the rules.' And, when I asked, 'Where are the rules?' They said, 'The State Departments'; 2) - Because of the way the State Departments were behaving, they were doing two things: (a) waiting for information to come to them; then making a judgment about it, and then deciding programs; or, (b) they were building advisory groups in order to create ideas to impose on those in the field. So, with the agreement of the NEPTE Board, I decided that we had to put a person in the State Department who would not be politically appointed, or dependent [Dr. Goddu].

The basic philosophical underpinnings of the Field Agent concept are seen by Dr. Goddu as "anti-predecessor." That is, his personal reactions against established

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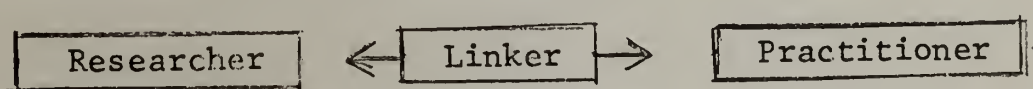
[3]During an initial meeting with Dr. Goddu, the Agent was granted permission to tape and to record the contents of the interview.

research and development centers, and regional laboratories that went quickly into "saleable,"* "visible,"* and "packaged"* products led to his forming the notion of NEPTE Field Agent. Dr. Goddu strongly supported the "people-theories"* in his instinctive rebellion against using "products"* as vehicles for change in the schools. The NEPTE Field Agent concept, therefore, is based on his own intuition, emotion, impressions of others, and inductive reasoning. A concept of the Field Agent can remain sterile, however, unless it can be transferred into an operational practicality. The "linker" model, put forth by Ronald Havelock (1968), afforded for Dr. Goddu and the NEPTE Board, a workable basis as a mode for transduction of the hypothesis into a methodology. Havelock postulated the transactional role of a "linker," who functions as a bridge between researcher and practitioner, by inter-posing additional individuals or groups between the two systems. These additional intermediaries, according to Havelock, should be knowledgeable in the linking process.



(Havelock, p. 65)

The "linker" model includes the possibility of three knowledge-linking role types (as stated in Havelock, p. 67):

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*Dr. Goddu's terms

1. conveyor--one whose function is "to transfer knowledge from producers (that is, scientists, experts, scholars, researchers), to users (receivers, clients, consumers)";
2. consultant--one whose function is "to assist users in identification of problems and resources, to assist in linkage to appropriate resources; to assist in adaptation to use: facilitator, objective observer, and process analyst"; and,
3. trainer--one whose function is "to transfer by instilling in the user an understanding of an entire area of knowledge or practice."

The conveyor performs the most rudimentary and simplistic linker role, i.e., it is the role in which the conveyor takes knowledge from expert sources and simply passes it on to potential, non-expert users. However, a conveyor linkage usually leads to more complex linkages.

The consultant role tells 'how' to do something in addition and in contrast to the conveyor's 'what' to do. The underlying rationale for consultation is that only the client can determine what is useful. If knowledge is taken, then the consultant can act as a collaborator, and can also perform as a conveyor.

In contrast to the roles of conveyor and the consultant, the trainer tries to inculcate new knowledge prior to the time the practitioner starts work (i.e., a university professor). The trainer also has some position of authority

over the learner (i.e., the relationship of teacher to student).

According to Dr. Goddu, the method to be used by the Field Agent is derived from Rogerian psychology. "From Carl Rogers, we accepted the notion of a person growing through confrontation and analysis while taking advantage of his ability to develop self in an autonomous, helping environment [Goddu and Ducharme, 1971, p. 14]."

Also serving as a theoretical framework for methodology are existentialist philosophy[4] and the Eriksonian analysis of Gandhi's militant non-violence posture[5] in effecting change.

> It's [the theory] never in one place. It doesn't exist as one book. One of the ways to understand it is to think of it as 'political-process-theory' rather than to think about it as psychological theory. The way I explained it is: the theory that it was early built on is 'the significant-other' theory, and (a) how does one identify

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[4]Dr. Goddu views the existentialist philosophy as representative of "an attitude." According to Dr. Goddu, "an existentialist develops his own definition of 'self' in terms of what he does."

[5]Erik H. Erikson, one of the leading figures in the field of psychoanalysis and human development, describes Gandhi's manifestation of his philosophy of militant nonviolence as singularly important in man's psychosocial evolution. "At such periods in his life Gandhi possessed...a capacity to reduce situations to their bare essentials, thus helping others both to discard costly defenses and denials and to realize hidden potentials of good will and energetic deed. This, I submit, actualizes something in man...[Erikson, 1969, p. 435]."

> with credibility, and (b) how does one gain with 'significant-others?' It's 'psycholitical' [Dr. Goddu].

There are a number of purposes to the NEPTE Field Agent concept. One objective is to test out a model of educational reform that is based on a person serving as a transactor rather than relying on a written document. In the past, according to Dr. Goddu, the assumption had been that "paper carries people with it" rather than "people carry papers to them." Rationally, then, Dr. Goddu concluded that instead of giving people a piece of paper, give people a person; that is, a person who would be responsible for linking problems and the solutions for the problems. Another purpose to the concept of Field Agent is to find a way into State Departments that will remain relatively free from bureaucracy. In order to induce functional relationships between State Department personnel and an Agent, it was deemed mandatory to avoid putting the Field Agent into the niche of a State Department hierarchial structure. Achieving this goal would lead to: (a) trying out new ways for a State Department person to operate, (b) establishing ways to work more closely with teachers and school system personnel in developing programs, and,(c) effecting educational reform in a systematic way.

The concept of Field Agent, then, is intended to support the educational reform movement through the provision of a change specialist. Such a person could work from a perspective

of educational reform with the whole school system. Curriculum and staff development problems could be explored on a personal basis.

The function of the Field Agent began from NEPTE's own original staff role. The staff (early 1971) were overwhelmingly requested to make on-site responses to various regional needs and questions, and to act as resource people, while, at the same time, they were attempting to launch some of NEPTE's early programs. When a request was not consistent with an existing staff competency or interest, appropriate help within the region was solicited, thereby enabling NEPTE to accumulate a list of effective resource people. Most visits usually served the function of catalyst for subsequent visits, and because of their open-ended nature, closure was rarely achieved.

> That first year taught NEPTE staff that the six New England states would probably continue to unwittingly make impossible demands on staff time, that new staff members should not consider themselves only as experts in a particular competency ...and that people flexible enough to fill multiple roles could accomplish many tasks while ostensibly doing one [Ducharme, p. 6].

In September, 1971, two Field Agent assistant-director positions were added to NEPTE's already existing staff of five professionals who were serving the entire six state region. One Agent was to be located in the Maine State Department of Education, and the other in Rhode Island at Rhode Island College. This action was consistent with NEPTE's

philosophical position with respect to the Field Agent role, as it was a field-focused, "people-oriented" emphasis, rather than a heavily centralized, bureaucratic, "materials-oriented" program (Dr. Goddu).

Decentralization of the program authority and responsibility was to prevent the crippling effects associated with rigid bureaucracies. Through collaboration of the various Field Agents, it also made possible the early linking of other agencies of the region with NEPTE,and to each other, through a common interest. Service and funding were focused not only on a central point, but were also directed toward other regional agencies. It was projected that as the decentralization effort continued, each agency would become an additional "energy center [Dr. Goddu]" for attracting resources and interests in teaching to that part of New England, to the agency involved, and in return, to NEPTE.

A year later (1972) a proposal to the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) was submitted and was funded. Six NEPTE Field Agents, each with a specific competency, were appointed and placed in each of the six New England States. A joint arrangement was entered into by the respective State Departments of Education and NEPTE. Contractually, each Field Agent was to spend 60% of his time on State specified tasks and 40% on regional (NEPTE) tasks. For example, Rhode Island needed someone with competence in Performance Based Teacher Education (PBTE), while

in New Hampshire, expertise in leadership training was requested. Beginning in July 1972, Vermont accepted its first Field Agent, who was an evaluation expert.

4. The Anisa Model:

The 1974 ANNOUNCEMENT, published by NEPTE, describes the NEPTE/Anisa Project as follows:

> NEPTE sponsored research at the Center for the Study of Human Potential at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst has resulted in a revolutionary concept of learning and teaching called the ANISA MODEL. This project is currently being field tested in several different schools. NEPTE is prepared to assist school districts and colleges wishing to introduce this new learning and teaching system [p. 2].

The Anisa project was conceived about 13 years ago by Dr. Daniel Jordan, who was then at the University of Chicago completing a doctoral program in Human Development, an interdisciplinary program based on a study of the development of the human organism from conception to death from anthropological, sociological, psychological and biological points of view. Prior to this, he prepared for a career as concert pianist, composer and musicologist. This program of study, together with his additional training and experience in the visual arts and dance, provided Dr. Jordan with a rich background in the arts. The balance between the sciences and the arts that is represented in Dr. Jordan's own preparation is reflected in the curriculum of the Anisa Model. Furthermore, his background as a psychologist provided insight into man's potentialities,as well as the

pathologies which result from their suppression. And, his experience in education provided him with the disturbing awareness that much of education as practiced today cannot release, but only suppress the potentialities of man unless it undergoes a radical change. Today, Dr. Jordan is Director of the Anisa Project at the University of Massachusetts, with a Senior staff of eight, an Associate Director, and a student body of ten graduates who are being trained in the Anisa system. Senior staff members have participated actively in the formulation of the theory underlying the model. Today, the Anisa story has been heard by approximately 50,000 people, and is being field tested in Hampden, Maine; Kansas City, Missouri; Fall River, Massachusetts; and Suffield, Connecticut.

Because NEPTE's function is to improve education and to "challenge...New England schools to develop the richest possible learning experiences for children in a formal school system [Goddu et al, 1970, p. 26.]," it provided the initial support to develop the theoretical formulations basic to the Anisa Educational Model, with a grant of $175,000. Once this stage was completed, NEPTE, because of its confidence in the quality of these formulations supporting the Model, sought to broaden Anisa dissemination efforts by hiring an Anisa staff member as Educational Field Agent for Vermont, thereby linking the Anisa Model and NEPTE's client, the Vermont State Department of Education.

"The Anisa model is based on a re-definition of education as those processes or experiences that underly the development or release of human potential [Jordan & Streets, 1973, p. 22]." It rests on the philosophical premise that man is endowed with unique capacities; that he possesses an infinitude of potential; and, that he has the capability for conscious knowing, loving, planning, and creating. Through the actualization of these potentialities, man can truly seek and find the way to unify humanity in peace, thereby enhance his own survival, and express his own capacity for transcendance, a perpetual 'going beyond' that which is already known and done. Anisa defines education as the process of translating these potentialities into actuality at an optimum rate. Anisa finds that teachers, with such a positive view of man, can never regard a child as being uneducable, or another human being as worthless.

Rooted in this philosophical view of the positive nature of man, the Anisa Model then goes on, through a theory of development, to

> define those experiences which teachers may use to actualize given potentialities of their students in ways that continually and actively create further potential while at the same time providing a conceptual means for identifying suppressive experience that should be avoided [Jordan & Streets, 1973, p. 293].

The Anisa theory of development takes into account both the biological and psychological growth of the human organism. Because it sees them as inextricably bound,

> The theory broadly defines development as the process of translating potentiality (biological and psychological) into actuality; makes that process synonymous with creativity as the fundamental and inherent dynamic characteristic of the organism; establishes interaction with the environment as the general means by which the process is sustained; provides for a definition and classification of potentialities and essential interactions underlying the release of both biological and psychological potentialities; identifies nutrition as the primary element in the development of the former and learning as the key factor in the development of the latter; and, accounts for the emergence of personal identity --the self--in terms of the structuring of potentialities as they are actualized [Jordan & Streets, 1973, p. 293].

The Anisa Model has a strong emphasis on proper nutrition and good health as the key to the actualization of biological potentialities which, logically, relates to the actualization of psychological potentialities. The key factor in the process of actualizing the psychological potentialities is learning. Learning competence is achieved when the student knows how to learn and therefore takes charge of his own process of learning.

A clear understanding of the nature of learning competence, as it relates to the total body of theory underlying the Anisa Model, is important, because it increases the teachers' power to facilitate the release of potential by providing the guidelines for individualization of learning activities. Anisa thus defines learning competence as the

> ability to differentiate experience, whether internal or external, into separate elements, to integrate

> them in a new way, thereby providing new information, new feelings, new skills and new perceptions which may or may not become expressed immediately in some form of overt behavior, and to generalize the integration. Through these processes -- differentiation, integration and generalization -- potentiality is translated into actuality. Control over them constitutes learning competence [Jordan & Streets, 1973, p. 297].

Anisa has organized the psychological potentialities (related to the biological potentialities), or powers of man, into five categories. This constitutes the process curriculum, since each is comprised of processes that underlie learning competence, and are the means through which those potentialities become actualized. The categories of potentialities are: psycho-motor (the coordination and control of movement and position of voluntary muscles); perceptual (the interpretation of sensory information); cognitive (the ability to think); affective (the organization and control of emotions); and, volitional (the formation of purpose and ultimate aims).

The Anisa theory of curriculum, derived from the theory of development, therefore, is defined by two interrelated sets of educational goals. One set of goals rests on the processes which comprise the psychological potentialities heretofore presented. The other set of goals is content-oriented. It rests on the classification of environments with which the developing organism interacts (physical, human, unknown, and 'self'), and the organization of information one's culture has accumulated about them, including

the symbolic systems used to convey that information (math, language, and art).

The Anisa theory of pedagogy defines teaching as arranging the environments and guiding the child's interaction with them to achieve educational goals. Thus, an Anisa teacher, with a positive philosophy of the nature of man, and a definition of development that provides guidelines for the curriculum process of translating the biological and psychological potentialities into actuality, as well as a theory of pedagogy, insures the achievement of learning competence (see Figure 1).

Such a comprehensive and integrated theory is the result of ten years of research in all areas of potentiality and learning. The model was developed through a deductive process of theory building from an explicit philosophical base, and through an inductive process based on careful analysis and synthesis of research findings reported in the literature. These processes of theory building and refinement are ongoing. Anisa is constructed as a scientific model, thereby assuring its clarity and replicability. Predictability of results of systems based on the model has yet to be determined. (For a further discussion, see Jordan & Streets, 1973, pp. 289-307.) Anisa is, therefore, a field, research-oriented project as well as one that is theoretically based. The entire staff and their students seek to interact with accessible school districts on an

Figure 1

The Anisa Process and Content Curriculum
Summary Table

The Child:

actualizes these potentialities (process)	as he interacts with these environments,	assimilating these bodies of information (content),	utilizing these symbol systems,	thereby forming these values (content fused with process),	on which these higher-order competencies are based.
Psycho-motor Perceptual Cognitive Affective Volitional	Physical	Physical and biological sciences, and technology	Math	Material	Technological
	Human	Social Sciences, history, human relations, communications, law, human rights	Language (s)	Social	Moral
	Unknowns	Philosophy, religion, aesthetics, humanities, and	The Arts (as expressions of ideals or structuring of the unknown)	Religious	Spiritual
	Self	All of the above as they relate to Self (which is important for physical, psycho-social and spiritual health	All of the above applied to the Self	Personal identity or character (all of the above combined into the Self)	personal effectance (all of the above combines into this aspect of the Self)

[Jordan & Streets, 1973]

on-going basis. It is felt that only through these interactions can the research component, sustained by those in a university-setting, be subjected to reality-testing, thereby improving their theories on the basis of practical considerations. In their most recent publication, the Directors of Anisa stated:

> Millions have also been invested in thousands of research projects, many of which are insignificant by virtue of the triviality of the issues addressed. Furthermore, these efforts are fragmented. They are not guided by any comprehensive over-view of the nature and scope of the educational reform required to forestall what will inevitably become an unmanageable action on the part of a neglected and frustrated student population and their families. More often than not, research is carried out by those who feel no obligation to translate their findings into practice. Results are published in some journal and there it is left. Studies have shown that newly developed effective practice in the hard sciences takes from three to five years to be adopted throughout the systems dealing with those sciences; in education, it may take 50 years [Jordan & Streets, 1974, p. 3].

In concert with this view, Dr. Roland Goddu's choice of the Anisa Model for NEPTE support grew out of his awareness that the past decade of educational programs and projects, planned either solely at the higher levels of education, or in the schools themselves, were neither giving much thought to the role of change nor to the needs of each other. If, for example, a university received a grant to innovate a program, the program's participants rarely saw as appropriate the cooperation of the people in the field. They usually created their own experimental environment, or merely used

the site for its field activities. This divisiveness in efforts is corroborated in an article depicting the relationships described above:

> The relationships between educational researchers and school personnel are breaking down. Reasons for the changing relationships in research are not surprising: Both the volume and the scale of educational research have increased enormously; educational researchers have too often played to an audience of academic peers, causing resentment among educators . . . [Baldridge, Deal, Johnson, & Wheeler, 1974, p. 701].

Other research, however, presents views that are more consonant with Dr. Goddu's rationale for using a member of the Anisa staff as Field Agent, thereby seeking realization for one of its goals.

> Change in social systems is often stimulated by an individual, or by groups of individuals, who effectively link practice institutions, such as school systems, with knowledge producing organizations, i.e., university. As basic research is developed, and applied to practical problems, these individuals act to communicate this knowledge to those who may need it. In some cases, these . . . may also assist potential adopters in the installation of the new idea in their system . . . [Cooke & Zaltman, 1972, p. 1].

5. Interrelationship with Vermont State Department of Education:

The Vermont State Department of Education, as a member of the New England Commission, is one of NEPTE's clients. The Department was still agreeable to testing the Field Agent notion after its first Agent had left. NEPTE was a patron of Anisa. That is, because it saw Anisa as a useful, comprehensive, exportable model, it provided money

and support because it was convinced of the product. With this commitment to Anisa, NEPTE reasoned that an Anisa-trained person would link, without distortion by a middle man, more quickly and more accurately the Anisa expertise needed in school systems.

Anisa was not new to Vermont educators. Dr. Jordan had, by invitation, spoken at various educational conferences and meetings in Vermont over a four-year period, so that interest in Anisa had been engendered already. Therefore, with a goal of making the connection more direct between the VSDE and its field, NEPTE saw in a Field Agent from Anisa a chance to fulfill this goal, as well as to create a direct connection between Anisa and the Vermont system, thereby designing an inter-system paradigm for linking available and interested resources with the clients in need of them.

> The basic functions of the Vermont Department of Education are to provide leadership, service and administration of State Board of Education policy and State statute to local educational agencies that will result in providing every Vermont pupil with equal educational opportunity for quality education. Further, the Department seeks the cooperation of all forces in the improvement of education in Vermont [Vermont Department of Education, 1973, p. 3].

The statement presents the following goals and objectives geared towards the improvement of existing useful activities, and the introduction of new ones for better education:

I. To Administer POLICIES of the SDE and the Statutes of Vermont.

II. To Develop and Maintain a Data Base Necessary to Determine Current and Projected Educational Needs,

Plans and Programs.

III. To Provide State Leadership and Consultative Services so that Local Initiative is Strengthened and School Districts Will Provide More Real and Equal Educational Opportunities for All.

IV. To Provide Leadership in Obtaining Improved Communication Among Students, Parents, Communities, Agencies, Branches of Government, Educators and the Department Concerned with Public Education.

V. To Upgrade and Intensify the Efforts of the Department to Provide a Well-articulated Leadership and Service Program . . .

VI. To Assist in the Development of Local Programs That Will Enable Each Vermonter to Have, at the End of His-Her Formal Education, Knowledge of the 'World of Work' and Acquisition of a Salable Skill.

VII. To Coordinate the Function of the Various Divisions and Office Within the Department of Education.

VIII. To Increase the Levels and Quality of Department Involvement in the Legislative Process (pp. 4-12)

The realization of many of these objectives rests in the expectations of the implementation of the VERMONT DESIGN FOR EDUCATION (1971). This is a published statement of broad premises that represent the position of the Vermont State Department of Education. Its concepts constitute for teachers a broadly based philosophy of education on which to base cognitive and affective goals, ideals, and an individualized student-centered philosophy for the process of education in Vermont.

The DESIGN was developed in 1967, in cooperation with lay and professional groups, in order to significantly involve the public in the 'upgrading' of Vermont schools.

It was felt that rather than issuing edicts from the State Department level, the VSDE should place great emphasis on the involvement of its citizens and professionals within each community of Vermont. This was to ensure the cooperative efforts of students, teachers, administrators, communities, and the State. All those participating in the effort, according to the DESIGN's premise, are inter-dependent, and should result in the development of a 'team approach' toward the common goal of improving the learning opportunities for persons of all ages. The introduction of the DESIGN in 1968, therefore, served as a springboard for intended comprehensive involvement of teachers, students, communities, and administration to create their own design for education within their own Districts. This specialized approach was, in reality, decentralization for Vermont, by generating as a projected goal the local variety in public education that could be achieved by local control of the schools.

Vermont has 55 superintendents who preside over 55 supervisory unions (a union is a cluster of town school Districts under one superintendent). With the exception of the more densely populated cities and towns which make up individual Districts (i.e., St. Johnsbury, Burlington), most superintendents serve several towns or Districts. Usually, each town has its own School Board, so, in many cases, one superintendent can have five or more school boards within

his District.

Within the VSDE itself there are six Divisions, each having a Director. The Directors operate under the leadership of the Commissioner of Education, and his Deputy Commissioner of Education (who, in turn, both serve the State Board of Education) towards the coordination and implementation of the basic functions and goals listed in the DESIGN.

B. Performances of the Field Agent

Since the personal experiences of the author of this treatise were gained as an active Field Agent in the State of Vermont, most of the following commentary is based on knowledge from first hand experience. The VSDE was the headquarters for the new Field Agent of Education. According to the contractual agreement between NEPTE/Anisa/VSDE (in Appendix A, pp. 253-254) NEPTE was to provide the financial resources, to serve as fiscal agent, and to monitor the Project through monthly progress reports submitted by the Agent. In addition to Anisa/NEPTE budgetary decisions, Anisa was to provide personnel equivalent to four man-days per week through its Vermont Field Agent and/or other Anisa staff. The VSDE was to determine the areas to be served by the Field Agent, as well as to provide NEPTE with periodic monthly reports written and submitted to the VSDE by the Field Agent. The contract stipulated that the projects selected to receive

services from the Field Agent[6] would focus on planning, curriculum and staff development. Accordingly, four of the six Divisions in the Department were chosen: (1) Division of Teacher and Continuing Education; (2) Division of Federal Programs; (3) Division of Elementary and Secondary Education; and, (4) Division of Planning Services. The Director of each Division was to assign to the Field Agent tasks which would meet the needs in his area of responsibility. The Director of Planning Services Division was to serve as Field Agent Coordinator as well. A network of complex strategies, then, was to be implemented by three interacting agencies, (NEPTE, Anisa, VSDE). The Field Agent was to be the active link in the transactions between three agencies that were functionally differentiated but engaged in problem solving around the common role of educational improvement. She was to be an autonomous Field Agent in education, conceived by, employed, and monitored by NEPTE; trained and supported by Anisa and its staff; assigned to four Directors within the VSDE and housed in the State Department's offices (see Figure 2).

Each of the three participating agencies had a different set of standards and a different set of role expectations stemming from its own frame of reference. The Field Agent

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[6]The contract reference to Field Agent was "Anisa-NEPTE Project Personnel.

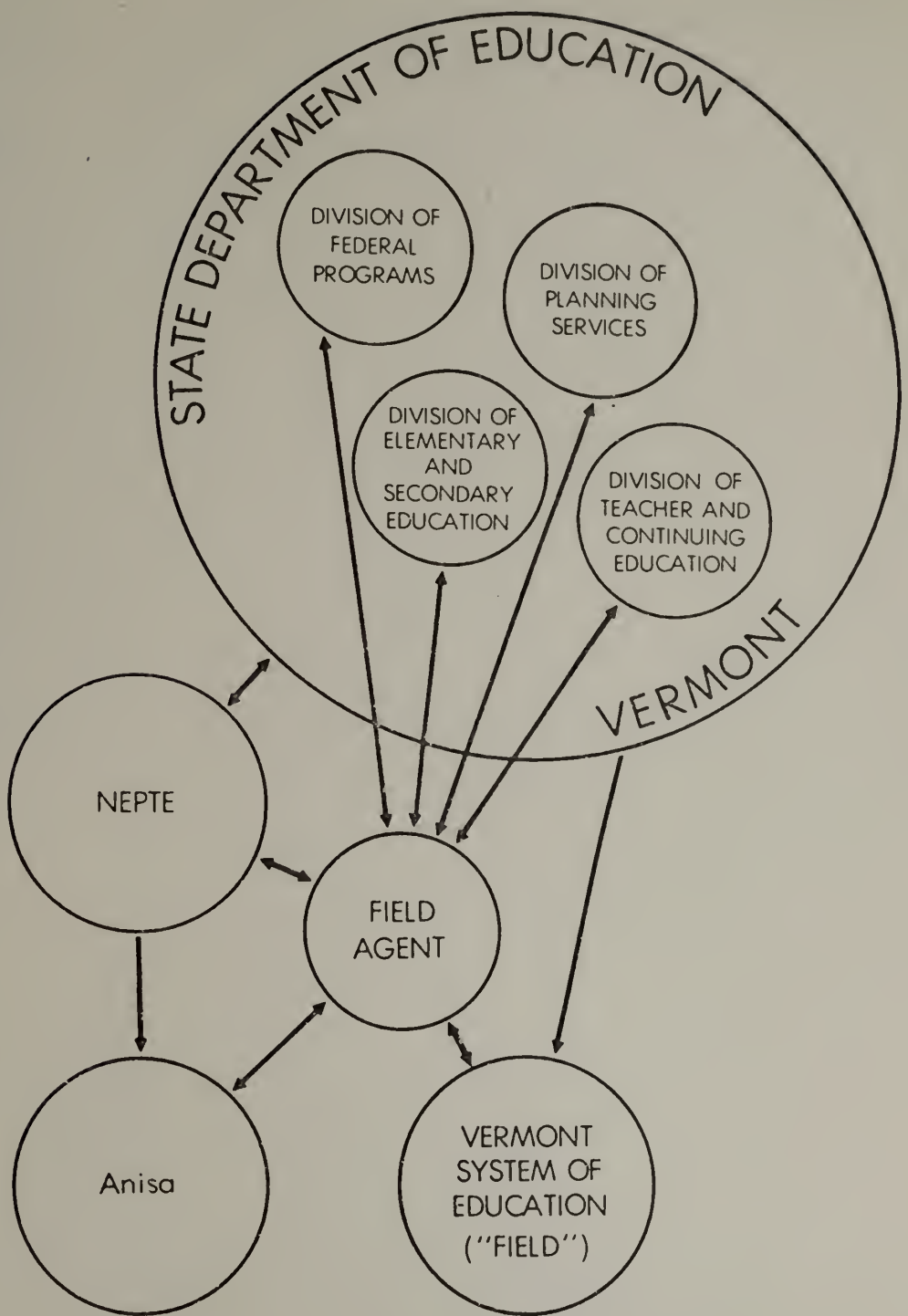
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS
DIVISION OF PLANNING SERVICES
DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
DIVISION OF TEACHER AND CONTINUING EDUCATION
VERMONT
NEPTE
FIELD AGENT
Anisa
VERMONT SYSTEM OF EDUCATION ("FIELD")

Figure 2

thus had to work with six different 'managing directors' (i.e., Anisa, NEPTE, and four Directors within the VSDE) and yet, was to be "mastered by none [Goddu]."

1. The Field Agent for Vermont:

NEPTE's specifications of characteristics for the role of Agent were very general, indicating only that the individual selected should serve as a personal link between individuals who wish to receive information, and possible sources of information at the State Department level. The Director of Anisa chose a resident of Worcester, Massachusetts, (a distance of 225 miles from Montpelier, Vermont and the VSDE). People in active education (i.e., the field) often place greater emphasis on experience than on scholarly achievement for education in their appraisal of a Field Agent's expertise. As such, a teacher may feel that the expertise of a university-based Agent is not adequate enough in view of the Agent's probable lack of recent experience. As Havelock (1968) has observed,

> Researchers and practitioners are from two separate social systems, with their own sets of rules, values, language and communication patterns . . . There is an inadequacy of shared values, common perceptions and inter-system communication patterns . . . Linking roles can bridge the gap . . . [p. 14].

The Director and Associate Director of Anisa were aware of this, and gave it serious consideration in making their choice for the Anisa Field Agent. The Agent chosen, therefore, had a number of years of teaching experience in a

classroom, as well as a solid foundation of education through her college background and subsequent Anisa training. An obvious extension of this experiential background was the age factor; the Field Agent chosen could 'look' more experienced because she was older. Interviews with the Directors of NEPTE and the involved personnel within the VSDE confirmed the choice.

Louis and Sieber (1972) talk about the probability of three personality clues for innovativeness:

> (1) High energy; (2) a wide 'effective scope' (i.e., knows about research, innovations, reads widely, travels); and, (3) a sense of personal efficacy (thinks he can get things done, attack difficult tasks) [p. 39].

The choice of Field Agent conformed to these clues. Havelock (1968) describes the advocate of innovation as

> the champion, a man who sees the value of invention, comes to believe in it, and decides to devote all his energies to selling it to top management . . . The big factor is motivation and self-investment in the kind of innovation that can supply answers to any request on any level, in a general or a specific way, without mentioning its name [p. 82].

The Agent chosen was convinced, experientially, of the contribution and effectiveness to schools of the Anisa Model, and she looked to a demand for increased implementation in other school systems. She was also highly motivated by her wholehearted agreement with the basic tenets held by the three participating organizations. She perceived the NEPTE Field Agent Concept, the Anisa Model, and the Vermont State Department of Education's implementation of the Vermont

Design to be compatible, thus warranting sufficient optimism to offer her services to the Project.

2. Field Agent Goals and Strategies:

The evidence of harmony in the premises of NEPTE, Anisa and the Design could assure a congruency in projected goals and strategies for the Agent. An elaboration of this harmony follows.

(1) The concept of NEPTE concentrated on a pivotal role of values, as well as on a "'people,' not a 'thing' technology [Dr. Goddu]." Correspondingly, the Anisa Model was not only concerned with the engineering variables of a project's diffusion into a system, (i.e., those which are quantitative and measurable), but it was also highly involved with the human variables and values as well. (2) The Design's major focus was on facilitating educational effectiveness. Consonant with this, the basic functions of both NEPTE and Anisa are to reform education. (3) Anisa's approach to educational growth, like NEPTE's and the Design's is process-oriented, as opposed to focusing on the basic disciplines which emphasize static content memorization to the exclusion of process, and limiting methodology in teaching. (4) The Design's orientation was seen by the Agent to be primarily toward the use of the behavioral sciences in the solution to existing problems. The Agent believed, as did NEPTE and Anisa, that the ultimate goal of a Field Agent was to change the classroom, or the school, in some way,

by changing teachers in their ways of thinking and acting so that classroom experiences may be different from the present practice.

Thus, with such anticipated collaboration in the goals and strategies of the combined agencies, the Field Agent's expectations for Vermont were, in part, to translate the overall objectives of the Design into local action. Because of her own teaching background, she expected to relate with empathy to the teachers, and she foresaw providing assistance to teachers through the organizing of cooperative working teams within their own school, and the local and State systems. Her expected strategies were to develop trusting relationships with the clients and, with their collaboration, to work through the stages of problem diagnosis, solution-finding, and environment building within schools. Fulfillment of these anticipations was to be facilitated by the technical assistance of a team of experts from the Anisa staff. The team from Anisa represented all key areas of the school systems-e.g., administration, nutrition, learning, and development. Therefore, she assumed that because this Field Agent concept was 'backed' by a team, more skills and expertise would be brought to bear on the change issues than those of a single change Agent. Other Agent 'teams' might have problems in consistency amongst themselves concerning the assessment of needs and ways of addressing these needs, but such an arrangement as the present one, based on the same

theoretical framework, assured for her consistency and coherence in the application of assistance.

The Agent believed there was a 'good fit' between the demands of the role and her personal disposition. She was "people-oriented" and analytically inclined. The Director of NEPTE warned of the preponderant lack of closure when helping teachers and administrators work through problems. While this can inhibit one's motivation, the Field Agent found this stimulating when coupled with the challenge Vermont was facing in education. She was advised that performance of the Field Agent role demanded a high tolerance for ambiguity because there could be no specific and complete information for each part or phase of the program. The Field Agent anticipated clarity of understanding as a direct outgrowth of intended 'client-centered' activities and the advantages of an Anisa training. Her role strategies were to be flexible and adaptable to the varying conditions, the differing needs of different people, and to the unexpected. She felt that she could and should be 'responsive' rather than authoritarian, relying on a collaborative process of change, rather on a short-term, 'product' delivery. Her intended focus was to work with clients in helping them to interpret and to diagnose their own situations in order to better understand and act upon their own situations. It was precisely within this responsive role to clients' requests for direction and quality of the change process that the

Field Agent expected to 'live.' Beckhard (1969) says

> People support what they help create. People affected by a change must be allowed active participation and the sense of ownership in the planning and conduct of change. That is why a Field Agent needs to feel responsive [p. 27].

The Field Agent supported such a proposition that there must first be a felt need by the party who wants change. She was prepared for the conflict between what was initially expressed by those she was helping and their actual underlying feelings, and thus, she anticipated the resolution of this conflict through careful guidance and the establishment of trust.

Finally, she looked forward to her performance as an autonomous Field Agent for the State of Vermont. That is, she saw herself as a Field Agent who was provided the opportunity to serve Vermont by NEPTE, and who had the advantages of Anisa educational expertise for Vermont situations, when it was deemed appropriate to use. The freedom that comes when there is no complete ownership by any group (NEPTE, Anisa, VSDE) was an enticing factor.

3. Anticipated Difficulties:

Because of certain potential hazards inherent in the Field Agent role, successful performance was to require the following characteristics (Ducharme, 1973, pp. 8-9):

a) TOLERANCE FOR AMBIGUITY: The role of Field Agent, however completely a proposal will describe it, will be an undefined one in the initial stages. Because he will be working out of a small staff,

peer and organizational support will be minimal. Such situations are, at best, ambiguous.

b) RECOGNITION AND AVOIDANCE OF HIERARCHICAL LIMITATIONS: A Field Agent works in all the levels of an educational hierarchy and must, thus, be aware of the real and imagined levels. Yet, his function is to serve all levels; thus, he must be neither the tool of the higher levels, nor the advocate of the lower levels. Rather, he must work in such a way as to be useful to all. He must see himself as serving a function rather than serving a level on an imagined hierarchy.

c) AREA OF EXPERTISE: A Field Agent ought to have a recognizable skill in which he himself has confidence. This attribute is highly valuable in demonstrating specific competencies. He must also possess the quality of not being skill-bound; that is, he must be able to move into other areas of competency, as well as to see the transfer aspects of his own skill.

d) RESPECT FOR THE POTENTIAL OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES AND RESEARCH COMBINED WITH SKEPTICISM OF MUCH RESEARCH: A Field Agent must have a trust that not all inventions need to be redone because he knows that some research efforts have produced substantial results. At the same time, he must be sufficiently prudent to know that many studies have produced no answers.

e) DEMONSTRATED ABILITY AND DESIRE TO WORK WITH PEOPLE COOPERATIVELY: While in one sense a Field Agent works in a lonely environment, he is constantly interacting with people and carefully listening to them at varying ranges of closeness and cooperation. This interaction must be characterized by the agent's preference, not his tolerance.

f) ACCEPTANCE OF POSTPONED GRATIFICATION: A Field Agent rarely has the teacher's satisfaction of daily feedback on tasks. He must be able to function as a self-starter relying on his own initiative for continuation of activity.

There are weaknesses inherent in the nature of the Field Agent role itself. Not only was the NEPTE Field Agent role

to rely heavily on the characteristics described above (Ducharme, 1973), but it also was to involve a great deal of autonomy in the absence of any immediate feedback on performance, and considerable long distance, time-consuming driving which could be physically exhausting. The role can offer no perpetuity, tenure, or permanence in any department, since the role is chiefly one that will last as long as the problem will last. In addition, relationships between Agent and client can vary from 'two days' to many years, with interactions predicted to run the gamut of emotions.

There are few people who have the skill of "living-in-the-crack [Goddu]" where there is no predictability of needs and responses. In this context, Dr. Goddu explains that there is very little training of a systematic nature for people who require skills in organizational development and "people negotiations." According to Dr. Goddu, most univeristy specialists are very narrowly defined; most State Departments have specialists; and most everyone sees the world in "job descriptions" rather than relationships. "He, [the Agent] has to believe fully in what he is doing as well as in his skill in doing it. It is clearly not a role that is attractive to everybody [NEPTE FIELD AGENTS, #9, 1973, p. 13]." Of the six original Field Agents hired by NEPTE, four remained after the first year of implementation. Vermont's Field Agent was one of the remaining four. He served as an evaluator and a consultant in the

creation of evaluation proposals and plans. The VSDE Directors assigned him to school districts that were working on an accountability-evaluation-problem based on the prescribed goals and objectives of a newly imposed VERMONT DESIGN. In contrast, the projection for NEPTE was that "evaluation-talk [Dr. Goddu]" would soon lead to an awareness of problems in existing curricula and training programs. Vermont's Field Agent left within the first five months of his second year.

In November of 1973, therefore, NEPTE re-negotiated the Vermont Field Agent position to include Anisa staff. The NEPTE Board was asked to review the new arrangement which was the draft agreement drawn up by NEPTE, the Vermont Department of Education, and the Anisa/NEPTE Project.

C. Evaluation of Field Agent Performance

Any attempt to analyze and assess the success of an innovative program based on a "linking" model must consider the motivation and expectations of the human element forming the 'chain'. For those in NEPTE, the primary strength of the Field Agent approach was in their anticipation of the increasing impact, through additional personnel and range of services, of their field-based regional program. With each State Department in the New England region requiring an Agent with specific expertise, it had become clear to the NEPTE Board that in addition to calling on the NEPTE 'home' staff for assistance and solutions to problems, the Agent

could collaborate with the other NEPTE Field Agents, in their areas of expertise, to fulfill a need for additional resources. This differentiated Field Agent approach could bring together specialists who,because of their field experiences, were highly 'tuned in' to the state of education and, simultaneously, would be in touch with the entire educational field. This cooperation of Agents, along with their information reported at the monthly NEPTE joint staff meetings, could lead to a model of States working in collaboration with one another. Thus, the NEPTE personnel were building the "person-based linkage system" they sought to counteract the current "structure-based system [Dr. Goddu]."

As defined by the NEPTE administrators, another advantage of the Field Agent role was its "disinterested person [Ducharme, p. 11]" aspect associated with the neutrality of autonomy. While Field Agents were, in general, housed in State Department offices, they were also part of the NEPTE staff. This dual identity was intended to convey that the NEPTE Agents were captives of neither organization, but were to be a source of help to both. Therefore, to sum up NEPTE's 'link' in the chain: (1) - NEPTE was placing a person in contact with people, whose responsibility centered on serving them as a special resource. Through the hiring of a senior member of the Anisa staff, NEPTE was not only testing out its model of educational reform that was based on a person serving as a transactor (The Field Agent Model),

but it was adding the support of a team of people, thereby implementing the concept of "Field Agent" and "Field Agent Team." Using a medical analogy, the Field Agent, through an active role and training with such a comprehensive model, could be perceived as a 'general practitioner' who could either interpret and fulfill the needs of the 'patients' herself, or, when advisable, could refer the symptoms to those 'specialists' in her own Project who were better qualified in those areas of specialization. (2) - NEPTE, by providing financial resources to support the Agent, served as the "linking institution" between a research and development (R&D) model and a client system, enabling the gap between educational theory and practice to be bridged. With NEPTE serving as the "linking institution," it could provide the Agent with several kinds of support: (a) security--through its serving as a home base that was independent from both the practice world and the University world;(b) identity --through the Agent's own awareness that she is serving a unique function; and, (c) coordination. (3) - Armed with the knowledge of a comprehensive model of education, the Field Agent could fulfill all three of the role-functions described by Havelock (1968) as conveyor; consultant; and trainer. (4) - By linking Anisa, which is a NEPTE supported and endorsed Model, to the State of Vermont, NEPTE was fulfilling its goal as a vehicle for interaction and exchange between client and innovators, as well as increasing the

probability of Anisa's survival through continuation of funding from clients in the field. NEPTE's style in giving assistance is to use covert strategy rather than an overt strategy. Its philosophy is to work in a behind-the-scene manner. Consistent with this, NEPTE, in its support of Anisa, wanted Anisa to get the 'visibility' through an Agent from the Anisa staff.

The Anisa staff, too, moved toward realization of its goals through its participation in the NEPTE Field Agent Project. The Clark-Guba Research and Design (R&D) Model (in House, Kerins & Steele,1972) is useful here in the explication of Anisa's role. Clark-Guba classify educational change into four major stages:

> (A) - Research: the purpose of which is to advance knowledge which may serve as the basis for development; (B) - Development: which invents and builds a solution to an operating problem; (C) - Diffusion: to introduce innovation to practitioners; and (D) - Adoption: to incorporate the innovation into the target systems [pp. 1-14].

Using the same terms, then, Anisa had as its major objectives: (A) - to establish a comprehensive educational program based on research; to establish acceptance of it through its "diffusion" (testing out) in the target groups; and, to develop procedures by which the program would achieve its goals and be adopted. (B) - A linking agent from Anisa could be an applied researcher with a dual orientation, who could not only aid in the translation of research into a usable service, but who could also translate practice into

researchable problems by stimulating Anisa's 'research-world' through the feedback of problems in the 'practice-world' thereby relating theoretical and laboratory variables with 'real world' variables. Developmental models imply a direction of movement. They are not bound by time, since they, like their 'studied' subjects, go through stages that evolve into other stages at later points in time. Therefore, Anisa, as a developmental Model, could make use of an Agent from its ranks in the field as a 'reverse' consultant. Not only could the Agent marshall field support for Anisa and test its theory, but the Agent could also communicate back to its source the immediate school problems that are critical to educators--thus giving more direction to the research and development activities of the Model, and therefore providing more validity to the work and influence of Anisa. (C) - As an extension of the above utilization of a Field Agent in Vermont, Anisa sought realization of a collaborative, circular-type process in its diffusion of innovation. Many educational researchers (Baldridge et al., 1974; Peterfreund, 1970) are promoting a "non-linear" model of diffusion that requires a close working relationship among the teachers, administrators, parents and students. In order to bring about total collaboration, this complex process crosses professional and organizational lines by involving schools and researchers with the initial planning, development, implementation and evaluation. Always present

is the common goal of using the research findings towards the solution of actual educational problems, and the necessary provisions of constant feedback required to link field users effectively with researchers. Such were the goals of Anisa. (D) - Finally, the possible exposure and the constant feedback from teachers, administrators, parents and community over the course of time would provide valuable data for the projected Anisa regional center that would use many Agents of its own. In addition, the practical experiences of the Field Agent could serve as guidelines for future training of Agents. The Anisa Prospectus (Jordan & Streets, 1974) includes:

> The major resources for developing the model and sustaining the initial effort at implementation have come from the region [i.e., The Regional Commission and Nepte] rather than from just one State. The assistance from NEPTE was forthcoming on the expectation that there would be regional benefits deriving from the investment. It seems only natural that a regional center supported by financial assistance from the region should emerge out of these efforts [p. 8].

Briefly, then, NEPTE, Anisa, and the Vermont Educational System were to become linked by an Agent, each as clients for change--as well as agents of change in an interchangeable pattern. It shall be shown that while NEPTE, Anisa, and the Vermont field were the designated clients, the greatest challenge for the Agent was the Vermont SDE itself.

1. Objectives of the Thesis:

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine and

analyze the role of the Field Agent in Vermont and to evaluate its relationship to the intricate network of organizations, procedures, and motivating factors. The degree of achievement of the objectives or expectations of this new project for educational reform in Vermont is described. Finally, the evaluation of the general concept "Field Agent," as it relates to educational change in any part of the United States, is discussed. Conclusions and recommendations about the process of change as initiated and sustained by a Field Agent are presented.

2. Structure of the Thesis:

The form of this dissertation is, of necessity, descriptive and analytical of the project. Chapter I has provided an introduction to the body of the dissertation and includes a description of the participating organizations and their interrelationships. The basic method for collecting data was carried out by the author as participant-observer. Data sources were the personnel involved (i.e., members of Anisa, NEPTE, VSDE, and clients), and the logs of each experience that were kept by the Agent. Other written materials were the monthly reports, correspondences and memoranda pertinent to the assignments of the Agent, and the feedback on the services that were rendered. In most cases, this feedback was not based on written reports from others, but from the log of the author's own experience. In addition, relevant literature on educational change and

diffusion are included to provide reinforcement for the analytical and evaluative aspects of this dissertation.

Chapter II presents the data concerning the procedures by which activities were carried on, beginning in November, 1973, and ending on June 30, 1974; the sequential operations of the job; the allocations of time and services; and some general perceptions based on the log entries.

As with most experimental paradigms, the performance is often discrepant with the original expectations. Therefore, Chapter III presents an analysis and evaluation of the role of Vermont Field Agent, with cause-and-effect speculations based, in part, on information gleaned from the literature, as well as the Agent's own perceptions.

The Educational Field Agent notion is considered by many to be an analog to the Agricultural Extension Agent notion. This consideration is discussed in Chapter IV along with the author's views on the potential of a Field Agent concept in an approach to solving educational problems.

CHAPTER II

ACTIVITIES OF THE VERMONT FIELD AGENT IN EDUCATION

The need for innovative approaches to elevate the quality of education is generally accepted by all people concerned. But, like the sculptor given two choices--one, to create a work of art from a block of ice, or two, to educe shape and form from a block of granite--an educational innovation may either evanesce, or become a structural reality.

The establishment of the Field Agent as a link in a newly forged chain involving NEPTE, Anisa and the VSDE was realized. Inadvertently, the Field Agent became the hub of a wheel whose motion was directly dependent upon the energies exerted by these organizational powers. Tangential, or opposing energies accelerating the activities of the Field Agent, could result in fruitless wheel spinning. On the other hand, a cooperative effort could take positive directions. This localization of the Field Agent among three independent, organizational constituents foreshadowed some of the advantages and disadvantages to be encountered by the Field Agent.

Any evidence of achievements and disappointments are founded in the daily activities of the Field Agent and the responses they evoked. Therefore, in this chapter, profiles and detailed interchanges of these daily activities are objectively presented. Such a non-subjective exposition

serves as prologue to the normative aspects presented in the next chapter, i.e., --a more personalized statement of the author's particular value implications based on analytical findings. Through necessity, any description of the interactions are limited to experiences in relation to the State of Vermont's educational system where the Field Agent was assigned. In general, descriptions of tasks, proposed solutions, and responses are documented by taped conversations and recordings in a daily diary kept by the Agent. A factual highlighting of the day-to-day activities of the Field Agent encompasses interactions in three settings: 1) in Vermont; 2) in the Agent's home office; and, 3) in the offices of Anisa at the University of Massachusetts (Amherst).

A. Functional Aspects

In the contractual arrangement between VSDE, NEPTE and Anisa, the former determined in which directions the services of the Field Agent would be utilized. The Director of the Division of Planning Services of the VSDE served as coordinator for the Agent.

Four Divisions, listed in the previous chapter (p. 26), were to receive the attention of the Field Agent. The major impact of these services were distributed over four man-days per week. The work-time unit of a man-day was equivalent to the work performed by one person in one working day. If the Agent brought in one or more consultants from the Anisa staff to fulfill requests from a client, each participant

was to represent an individual man-day. Multiple man-day efforts could be performed during a given day at several locations (i.e., the VSDE, at home, or at the University).

1. Development of Assignments for the Field Agent:

Formalization of service expectations was discussed on the first day for the Field Agent in December, 1972. (The Field Agent recorded all conversations on tape with the consent of the participants.) At individual, Divisional, Director and Field Agent orientation meetings, tentative suggestions were proposed to activate departmentalized services. Time schedules were delineated at the same time. However, some flexibility of the schedule of assignments was maintained because of the gasoline shortage and the transportation problems of the Field Agent.[7] The Field Agent had to commute 450 miles between Worcester, Massachusetts and Montpelier, Vermont. A modified schedule was agreed upon that required the Field Agent's presence in the VSDE on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Telephone communication was maintained between the VSDE and the Field Agent's home or the University of Massachusetts (Amherst) on Mondays and Wednesdays during working hours. The Tuesday-Thursday timetable was divided among the various departments on a

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[7] 1972 and 1973 was the time when the gasoline shortage reached critical proportions during the energy crisis.

half-day basis, e.g., Tuesday mornings 'belonged' to the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education. One Division's assignment, Federal Programs, came at a later date, because of the provision of time to introduce the Field Agent to two innovative projects in progress. Subsequently, the Field Agent became involved in one of these projects.

2. Status of Vermont Educational Divisions:

At the time that the Field Agent's position became operable, the Vermont educational environment was,and still is,in a transitional period. There was a general effort to decentralize administrative control and to encourage individual evaluation of educational quality. The following is a quote from an educational publication in Vermont:

> In 1969, the Vermont State Department of Education launched a statewide effort in local school assessment and planning for the purpose of improving elementary education. The effort was a departure from a strict state minimum standard approach, although a few states' standards were included. It sought, instead, to have each school district set its own goals and program plans in terms of its current status, resources, and aspirations. To accomplish this, each town school district was required to form a committee of educators, school board members, and lay citizens. In some cases, the local school districts of a school supervisory union chose to combine their efforts and for a single representative committee. The Design Committee had established an important precedent for local and regional educational planning and community involvement [Vermont, a Right-To-Read State, 1972].

All Divisional personnel in the VSDE to which the Field Agent was assigned, were directing their energies towards

this decentralization effort.

It was important for the Field Agent to understand the motives and accomplishments of the personnel working toward decentralization, since the Field Agent was to interact with each of the four educational Divisions. Briefly, the Director of the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education was engaged in activities with a Blue Ribbon Committee responsible for proposing minimum standard regulations for a document known as Public School Approval Document, K-12, that would officially incorporate the Vermont Design into the educational plans of the State. The Early Childhood Commission Committee was to develop a position paper outlining long range plans for Early Childhood Education. A "Right-to-Read Program" was also in the discussion stage. The Director of this Division assigned the Field Agent to the two committees.

The Director of the Teacher and Continuing Education Division described to the Field Agent the new regulations for local teacher certification. Both certification and re-certification were based on the Vermont Design. They saw the Field Agent's qualifications as useful to the teachers in bringing about their implementation of this new Performance-Based Teacher-Evaluation Re-certification program (PBTE).

The Director of the Division of Planning Services foresaw possible collaboration between the Bennington Planning

Project, a comprehensive educational revitalization endeavor in Bennington, Vermont, and the Field Agent, through a mutual concern for developing a relevant curriculum based on Anisa theory.

The Director of the Division of Federal Programs designated the Field Agent as advisor to interns and personnel in that Division who were responsible for the implementation and evaluation of a new Title III Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Project. This program known as, "The Community Educational Change Agent" provided a process for change.

It should be noted that although the above tasks for the Field Agent were assigned departmentally, the actual work schedule was coordinated by the Field Agent. The priority of each task oscillated from 'figure-to-ground' according to the demands of the situation. For the sake of clarity, the stated tasks of each Division for the Field Agent are elaborated more fully below in context with the goals of the VSDE.

B. Divisional Activities of the Vermont State Department of Education

1. Division of Elementary and Secondary Education:

The leadership level (commissioners, superintendents, and principals) from all learning areas in Vermont education (Industrial, Arts, Math, Alcohol and Drugs, Guidance and Health, Humanities, etc.) was represented on the 35 member

Blue Ribbon Study Group. Under the chairmanship of the Director of the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, this steering committee strove to establish guidelines within the context of the Vermont Design. Each local district in Vermont was to create new, locally relevant goals and curricula for implementation and re-vitalization every five years. Basic principles agreed upon by the committee provided the rationale for the regulations they were to bring about. The following are excerpts from the Public School Approval Document (1973):

-Education is a dynamic process. . .

-. . . pupils can learn-and the teaching-learning processes are the central activities.

-. . . all Vermont Elementary and Secondary pupils. . . equal educational opportunities . . . includes choices and options

-. . . quality of an educational program depends on. . . community . . . professional competence of the School Board, administration and faculty . . . curriculum. . . human characteristics . . . career aspirations . . . financial resources. . .

-. . . systems should have precise and realistic goals. . . each school system should take action to provide educational experiences related to accomplishing its goals

-. . . provide for both self-evaluation and periodic appraisal . . . local board members, school administrators, faculty, pupils, parents, and other citizens shall participate

-. . . environment has a direct effect on educational tone . . .

The guidelines, subject to adoption by the State Board of Education, were to delineate procedures for curricula and

goal development, and their time limits, for the school districts. These regulations also were to define the basic standards for competencies required in every area of education (instruction, curriculum, faculty, library-media materials).

According to the statement accompanying the completed, published, but as yet State-unapproved Document, the original "charge" for this endeavor was given by a member of the State Board of Education on November 15, 1971 to the Director of the Elementary and Secondary Division of the VSDE. Requests to join a "representative group" on March 16, 1972, for the proposal of standards of approval, were sent out on March 1, 1972. The Field Agent participated in her first Blue Ribbon meeting on December 11, 1973. This assignment was somewhat belated, since discussions had been in process for approximately 21 months and were to terminate in less than one month.

The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education includes a Chief of Elementary Curriculum and Reading. One of the tasks of this person was to coordinate, edit and produce a Position Paper on the state of early childhood in Vermont. Historically, the word "mandatory" had been removed from the legislative bill on kindergartens, thereby waxing dim any hopes for required kindergarten education for the 50% of the five-year-old children not in school. The Early Childhood Division Director, therefore, saw the

vital need to present to the State Board of Education a comprehensive assessment of the current conditions in early childhood education in Vermont. The goal was to convince those on the State Board to provide some kind of early childhood services for Vermont's large numbers of unschooled, young children in rural areas, as well as in the urban areas. Because of the tight schedule of the State Legislature, it was incumbent upon the person responsible for the paper to produce it as quickly and effectively as possible. The Field Agent, therefore, attended many inter-Divisional committee meetings that were made up of educators who served as a sounding board for determining a position on. Early Childhood Education in Vermont.

For inclusion in the Position Paper,the Field Agent was asked, on February 20, 1973, to research every early childhood model established between 1965-1973 that represented an alternative to school based systems, and to present the findings to the curriculum chief within one month. The exposition was to include: (a) explanations of each model, with its curriculum focus, rationale, and methodology; (b) its staff requirements; (c) cost analysis; and, (d) the Field Agent's personal comments. In fulfillment of this assignment, the Field Agent sent many letters to and received many replies from prominent people in the field of rural and early childhood education. The Field Agent returned to the University of Massachusetts and sought assistance from

an Anisa staff member who had recently completed similar research. This is an instance when the Field Agent utilized Anisa expertise in the role of "conveyor [Havelock, 1968]." The research findings of the Field Agent were coordinated with the models conveyed by the staff member. The results were delivered with procedural suggestions from the Agent, and with recommendations in favor of early childhood education.

The Chief of Elementary Curriculum also had the responsibility of collecting, compiling, and analyzing statewide reading needs assessment data to be used in determining a plan of action for improving achievement in reading. The need for designing and implementing an evaluation strategy was created out of a formal "Right-to-Read" agreement between Vermont and the United States Office of Education in June, 1972. That is, Vermont was named one of the four original "Right-to-Read States" to receive federal funding.

The major goal of the effort is to increase functional literacy in the nation so that by 1980, 99% of the people over the age 16 will possess and use the reading competencies which an individual must have to function effectively as an adult. Another objective for implementation of the program is

> . . . to train local school district persons named by their districts to serve as leaders in developing and implementing good comprehensive reading programs, who will in turn provide in-service training to teachers in their districts [NEWS, 1973].

The Agent was called in to confer with the Chief on the merits of the Anisa program and its application towards the fulfillment of such a goal. The conference lead to follow-up meetings at the University of Massachusetts between the Director of Anisa and Vermont State Department personnel. Thus, a direct link was formed between Anisa and the Vermont State Department by the Agent.

2. Division of Teacher and Continuing Education:

For the State Department, the philosophy of the Vermont Design was to pervade every Departmental activity. Its implementation not only was to bring about decentralization of organization, and new school regulations for competencies for children, but it was also to have a direct effect on teacher recertification.

There is no permanent teacher certification in Vermont (no tenure). Until 1971, teachers were required to earn six semester hours of credit, or its equivalent, every five years, to be approved by the Superintendent of Schools in order to be recertified. The new mandate issued by the State Board of Education on July 1, 1971 empowered the Local School Districts to develop programs for the

> in-service training and professional advancement of its staff and . . . apply to the State Department of Education for approval to recommend issuance and renewal of all certificates at the local level. The appropriate certificate will be issued by the State Department of Education [Regulations, 1971].

Therefore, the locus of teacher recertification was

switching from the VSDE and University set courses to the local communities and the individual teachers themselves.

The teachers had the option to design their own plans for improvement within their own time limitation. Peer teams, or heterogeneous boards, were to be chosen by the teachers to form a committee to evaluate their individually designed local programs for State approval. These Local Evaluation Agencies (LEA) were to evaluate and approve the criteria designed by the individual teachers for their own recertification. Based on this local approval, the VSDE was to grant recertification.

These local programs of recertification were considered minimally as an option for the replacement of the traditional, University-established, six credit hour requirement. They were based on the assumption that teachers, as learners, should be more responsible for their own education, i.e., planning, carrying out, and evaluating their educational experiences; and that self-esteem would be enhanced in teachers if they were made responsible for their own education and re-education. According to a document sent from the VSDE to the school districts ("Certification Through Approval of Local Programs: Some Questions and Answers, 1973), some of the State Department's purposes in the local certification program were: (a) to get more clock hours and personal commitment than the six credit hour requirement; (b) to treat teachers the way they were being

asked to treat their students, i.e., to individualize according to the Vermont Design; and, (c) to encourage officially the search for new inventions and new solutions for educational problems [p. 10].

The program designed for individualization of learning pre-supposed certain criteria for evaluation. The LEA Certification Program was to specify the outcomes that could be in some way observed by others. Thus, one requirement for LEA passage was that the recertification program be defined by performance criteria enabling the establishment of a Performance-Based-Teacher-Evaluation (PBTE). This specification of results was to ensure the teacher's own participation in the analysis of his tasks, and the setting of goals for planning his competency improvement within his own specified time.

The emphasis of this new plan for teachers then, was to be on self-planning, self-renewal, and self-evaluation. The VSDE still was to grant final recertification and to provide the basic guidelines, but the initiative was to be taken by the local personnel.

It is essential to note here that this Local Recertification Plan was to be optional. All Districts were to be invited to listen to the plan, to discuss it, and then to vote on it for local passage. If denied, by some, or all, then the old recertification requirements were to remain valid for those who so chose.

The Field Agent's first meeting with the Directors of the Division of Teacher Continuing Education was an informational and planning meeting for the first stages of the Local Recertification Program. A schedule of PBTE workshops had been devised for the introduction of the plan. Rules and regulations, sample forms, and "questions and answers" materials had been distributed to all Districts. Three local workshops had already been held. The Agent was expected to attend the remaining workshops, along with the Director, his assistant Director, and at least five other State Department personnel.

The Director of this Division was also on the NEPTE Board and had already heard the Anisa story from Dr. Jordan a number of times. It was felt that the Agent's membership in Anisa was to be a key factor. The following are direct quotes from a meeting between the Director and the Agent on December 11, 1973. Although lengthy, the conversation reveals State Department perceptions of the field and of the Agent. Such perceptions are extremely relevant to the analysis to be presented in the next chapter of this thesis.

Director: A lot of the teachers don't know about this* yet or they don't believe it's true.

Agent: So you use the full workshop to introduce the program, and then they form into groups for discussion?

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*That is, the Local Recertification Plan and LEA.

Director: That's where the Field Agent comes in, and Anisa. We have people working with them to help to explain and ask questions. We would like them to think on a little larger scale than they might otherwise have done. That's the service you can give to us in working with these teachers.

Agent: Don't you think the Anisa approach would help the teachers to see the areas that need filling in for an exciting recertification plan?

Director: That's why we're interested in using this. That's one of the possibilities in the workshop, depending on what the local planning committee decides. The school committee might decide to have you on the program, which is the planning session; and after hearing you they might want you. We have to bridge the gap between what it is they think they will get at a conference and the understanding of the Anisa Model. They might not be able to tie the two together, you see. The biggest problem with local groups is with the preponderance of teachers [sic]. If you ask what was available to them, whether they believe it or not, they 'hear' the implications as they see them. They 'hear' that evaluation is by some 'unknown'; they 'hear' merit pay, they 'hear' getting fired because of someone not liking them. They have all these threatening possibilities. But the objective is really what we're after; that is, to enable teachers to improve themselves. That's all we want to do.

Agent: But it does have something to do with certification?

Director: Yes it does. But it's the only leverage we have. we couldn't even have these conferences without the certification leverage.

Agent: Then this program is to help the teachers to continue to grow in their areas of education--and if, perhaps, they hear of an educational model as an example of the way they might improve their specialties by linking them with the other available areas, they might begin happily to integrate everything they know. If I were to talk on music, for example, and its relation to reading, art, symbols or language, and perhaps come up with activities that might interest them in learning more about it for their recertification

design, etc.--maybe some of the teachers who are teaching reading have always wanted to study music but have never had time. The Anisa Model could show them relationships.

Director: Most of this is with the high school teachers, and they will be most suspicious until we can bridge the gap. So be ready for that kind of argument. They are the most negative and will see that as 'another imposed curriculum design.'

Agent: Have they come up with many kinds of curriculum designs?

Director: Now and then; individually, or in small groups. But there is another application of the Anisa Model to this specific problem, which is the right to professional planning. And that is, if they could begin with the competencies the children need in order to become 'lifetime learners', and then use their gaps as people helping children to become lifetime learners, you could on the spot, give them things to think about and let them reconceive their professional plans . . . We have to open up the possibility for them of alternatives and options they can use. But I'm hoping that with your versatility there'll be desire for follow-up which could include a more in-depth workshop. If you can have exposure at the conference and say; 'Here is a possibility for thinking about your professional plans,' and then they can have something to grab onto, and say 'Let us have these avenues next time', and you can do this in an hour, let's say--to whet appetites for you. It's so consistent with the local certification design! We're saying to teachers, 'You write your program for professional improvement.' They won't approve this local design unless a majority of teachers approve it. Based on a very important philosophical premise that no two teachers are the same; and that teachers are human beings. They've got to be given that freedom to be themselves, and if we start with that, the Anisa Model is something to which they can react!

Agent: The model does stress individualized instruction, which we believe to be vital for providing equal educational opportunities for children; we also believe that if a teacher has knowledge of the

developmental levels of a child, and clear learning goals, then that teacher can create, on the spot, whatever is necessary to create a relevant learning experience . . . But to be creative, one has to take risks, and taking risks means entering into what's 'unknown'. If teachers are worried that their certification is dependent on 'risks', it could be a hang up.

Director: But you're missing an important point! We are not going to withhold or take issue with the local [sic]. We're giving them the right and responsibility to do it once they have set up their programs so they don't have to worry about us. They have to worry about their peers and their methods. They're going to determine it. They do worry about their peers. But what they know from this program is if they design an individualized program for which the local system says 'okay', then they are free to go take those risks!

Agent: I strongly urge that I be introduced as someone to 'help'--having nothing to do with certification.

Director: We try not to mention the word [certified] . . . Sooner or later we get trapped into mentioning it--but we prefer not to . . . I really think you're going to have to play it by ear. You'll come to the first one and do your thing for an hour or so. Depending on reaction, we can plan for a follow-up.

Agent: Usual reactions are 'What should I do?' 'How?' 'What next?'

Director: That's why I want you to get around the floor and move around afterwards, and 'mix!' The real actualizer, [i.e., where either it's going to grab or not going to grab] is--the teacher sits down with pad and paper and her own head. The 18th and 25th of January are very important [workshop dates]. That's a total of 300 teachers or more.

The Directors left to attend a pre-conference session at the local site to plan, with the local planning committee, the agenda for the above PBTE workshop. During a subsequent

telephone conversation, the Agent was informed that the committee "didn't buy" the offer to talk about the Anisa Model. The Agent, therefore, was advised to "walk around," and to challenge the teachers to "test" the State Department (i.e., to try them out as far as "way-out" things).

The Director also said: "Teachers do not believe the State Department's willingness for individualized program improvement," and, "We are tremendously concerned with the lack of credibility; the mistrust between teachers and VSDE." The agenda, therefore, was: (1) - the VSDE would explain the recertification process; (2) - the teachers would break into groups to discuss their ideas for recertification; and then, (3) - the Agent was to sit in on discussion groups.

The Agent's personal log entry for that day's telephone call reads,"Comments: My going with VSDE personnel will make me as threatening as they. This is not what I see as my role." The reader is invited to read in the Appendix B, (p. 225), the instructions that were given to the group of State Department members who were to attend the conference.

The Agent went to two PBTE workshops. At the first workshop, along with the other visiting personnel from the VSDE and the University of Vermont, the Field Agent was introduced as "the person from Anisa"--but each attendee was given the opportunity to personally acknowledge the introduction. The Agent, in order to begin a 'trust-

relationship' with intended clients, attempted to clarify her role of Field Agent by defining the autonomous nature of the Field Agent position and its independence from the State Department. The Agent was not introduced at the second workshop.

Some of the log entries (January 25, 1974) for the first workshop are as follows:

> Comments: My job is virtually unknown to others!
> -The teachers broke into groups to talk about things their committee would have to incorporate in their guidelines. I 'floated', (other State Department personnel were assigned to specific groups), and found women were discussing content for committee activities rather than first establishing clear cut guidelines. I tried to 'come on' softly with tentative suggestions. The reactions were blank, amazed stares. I was an intruder.
> -I consistently gave my name, identity, and telephone number to teachers, urging them to use me as a resource. Anger, surprise, voiced at the existence of such a role and no information disseminated about it!
> -Bickering--almost an atmosphere of union fighting.
> -Prediction: Most teachers will opt for college courses because it's already structured for them!

Following this workshop, the Agent sent a written request (January 25, 1974) to the Directors of the Division of Teacher and Continuing Education. It was stated:

> 1-The position of Field Agent should be announced, somehow, to districts--along with a full description of the role. Reaction was, "How come no one let us know that such a person existed?" "Who are you?"
> 2-Requests had been made for input, questions, results and success of other districts already in process. Therefore-
>
> a. can you make a list, or question-answer format to send to . . . District, since it has been requested; or
> b. can you give me the paraphernalia and I'll bring it to the teacher who asked me?

In response to the memo, the Assistant Director informed the Agent that the material would be sent directly from his office to the teacher who made the request.

The second PBTE workshop was held on February 1st (the original date had been changed). In addition to the local teachers, there were in attendance eight State Department personnel, representatives from some of the Vermont institutions for higher learning, the "Helping Teacher" for the District, the Superintendent, a guest speaker from the National Institute for Education (NIE), and some teachers who were still debating the plan from other Districts. Personal introduction was not extended to the Field Agent. Following the formal part of the program, the Agent perpetuated self-introductions. A good deal of time was spent with the Superintendent explaining the role expectations and team-supported uniqueness of the Field Agent. As a result, an appointment was made for a meeting at a later date in order to discuss more fully a local problem of certification of para-professionals. Along with 'reminder notes' to follow up the verbal appointment with a letter, plus excerpts from the day's speeches, the following log (February 1, 1974) was entered:

> -a teacher from . . . talked to this group about their situation. They seem to be afraid of the local 'Performance-based criteria.' Teachers still threatened by hiring and firing . . .
> -I introduced myself to school board members as Field Agent 'available to help, etc.' As a result, introduced to Superintendent by Board member.

-Today, one week after the fact, I was indirectly informed by . . .[a Director from another department] that there seems to be 'flack' in the Continuing Education Department regarding my 'autonomy' announcement at the last workshop. I thought I was [autonomous]! It is necessary to establish some guidelines so that what I say and do is in concert with the VSDE!
-Vermont has a 'Helping-Teacher' program for each District. This is news to me! When I inquired about the possibility of my being a 'redundancy,' I was informed that I was '. . . sort of, but used differently in each area' (i.e., they were 'girl Fridays' for Superintendents, trouble shooters, sometimes workshops, not always skillful in curricula, etc.)
-The teachers are very outspoken, They are angry about pay scale--the overcrowded classes--too much work--'bitterness' etc. The teachers feel they are not trusted by the VSDE--otherwise they should have been given life certification in the first place. This, to me, is defensive rationalization, since they admit, on the other hand, that they don't want to do these other things because they don't have time. Much to be said for both points of view. Report this to . . . for field feedback.

There were no other workshops scheduled and there was no further feedback from the field. After a few weeks, the Agent wrote a letter to the teacher who had made the request for materials. Writing the letter was motivated by two incentives: (a) to inform the teacher that her request had been operationalized (i.e., the Agent had "come through"), and, (b) to use the letter as an indirect method of reminding the teacher of the Agent. There was no reply.

Finally, in addition to many private meetings at the request of the Directors for an explanation of the Anisa system, the Agent again served as link between the Division of Continuing Education and Anisa by arranging conferences, telephone reports and interactions that brought about a joint

Anisa/Vermont proposal to National Institute for Education (NIE) on teacher training for reading and implementation.

C. Para-Professionals

During the second PBTE workshop, the question of certification of para-professionals was raised. Apparently, this was a neglected area and offered the Field Agent an unusual opportunity for exploration. Approval to investigate this problem was necessary because, if sanctioned, it could reflect an achievement by a Field Agent in a new area. At a talk with the Director in charge of certification, the Agent was told that the VSDE had little to say about para-professional certification. The only reference to para-professional certification was to be found in the guidelines. Therefore, the Agent was given the Department's encouragement and blessing in whatever she decided to do with this troublesome, untouched territory. It was stated that any method devised by the Field Agent would be automatically approved for certification. A follow-up letter of confirmation is in the Appendix C,(p. 256).

1. Interaction of the Field Agent:

With such a faith commitment on the part of the VSDE, the Agent set about to assemble and to read all the literature available on para-professionals (i.e., definitions, role expectations, requirements, and certification). The assistance of the Assistant Director of the Anisa Project, a man who was knowledgeable in this particular field, was

mobilized. Conferences were held and notes compiled and discussed in preparation for the meeting with the local Superintendent. Data were collected on the para-professional program in the relevant District. It was clear that para-professionals in this District were concerned with upgrading themselves. They desired more money and realized that a requisite to doing so involved getting certified as a teacher. On the other hand, the Superintendent was concerned that teachers would be threatened by the improvement in the status of para-professionals, thus responding to the protection of a teachers' union. The potential effect had to be considered.

The Anisa Assistant Director, as a consultant (a 'team'), accompanied the Agent on the day of the meeting. The local Superintendent and two administrators (Elementary Supervisor and Director of the local Curriculum center) were in attendance. The Superintendent introduced the Field Agent as the "person from Anisa." He asked the Agent to tell the Anisa story and then he left the room. A valiant effort by the Field Agent brought the topic back from an Anisa lecture to the para-professional situation in Vermont. The interaction was halting, but the conference clarified the steps necessary for resolving the para-professional situation for all concerned. The Agent was invited to attend the first-step meeting. She accepted on the condition that the local leaders think about the implications of the Agent's presence

at this meeting; i.e., whether it would benefit or inhibit open expression. The administrators were urged to express their feelings in this matter and to telephone the Agent "collect." The log entry (March 6, 1974) records:

> -I think their reactions to the meeting were positive. They seemed happy and confident in 'what to do' next. At first, they looked for specific 'cookbook' directions on how to conduct a meeting, but, I believe, they were finally 'comfortable' with the unstructured-structures we advised.

2. Results of the Field Agent's Efforts:

Reports of this successful meeting in the field were submitted to the State Department Division's Assistant Director the following week. At this conference, the Field Agent was informed, for the first time, that there had been many requests concerning clarification on para-professionals. The Director, in response, had formulated a definition within the bounds of a Vermont law (or interpretation of it), and had extensively circulated a written version. Unfortunately, the policy formulation and interpretation was contrary to what had been discussed at the Agent's meeting in the field. In as discreet a manner as possible, the Agent voiced concern over this turn of events. Such contradictions and inconsistencies would assure the representation of the Vermont Field Agent as a caricature-type role. The need to contact the 'ill-advised' local Superintendent to inform him of the new definition was paramount. The Assistant Director informed the Field Agent that he had already taken care of the matter.

On April 9, 1974, the following log was entered:

-I had a conference with the Assistant Director about the para-professional incident.

A. I told him I was disturbed about his anger, and concerned over the future of the Field Agent concept.

B. I read to him the notes in our meeting with . . . [the Superintendent in the field] . He sat and listened quietly.

1. Then he said that one of the women had called him after we left. She wanted to know who I was, what I represented, etc. Seems that no help was offered to her and did I represent the State Department?
2. The Director said I did not represent the State Department authority, but was rather a facilitator, or helper. If I did not help, then they were under no obligation to use me.
3. I then asked 'Why was I told indirectly he [the Director] was 'up in arms'? He said that he was not; that the only thing that could refer to 'up in arms' was the business of her saying I was of no help--and that was really o.k!
4. . . . [Agent's personal comment]

C. I told him I wanted him to have a copy of the notes I took of the meeting in the Field.

D. He said anything I do 'within the framework of the VSDE' still will be approved.

E. I told him I was concerned about the future of the Field Agent concept; such contradictions would diminish any legitimacy in the role.

1. . . . said that next year, the Field Agent would have assigned research tasks so the job would be less ambiguous.
2. He said it takes years for an 'outsider' to be accepted. Vermonters can shake their heads 'yes' right to you - and vote 'no' immediately after . . . [Agent's comments]
3. The Director said I had handled the job with 'courage' and 'poise,' and that it takes awhile to understand the closed communication here; especially when one is accustomed to the open, academic, give-and-take interaction of a University.

F. I told him of the success of the . . . High school* and the teachers' eagerness to move ahead.

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*See Division of Planning Services, p.83 (Chapter II).

1. I had pointed out to the teachers that the ultimate goal in education was to make the child a competent learner--in charge of his own learning, etc.
2. . . . said that I should be careful that conveying a concept like that i.e., putting the learner in control . . . was 'revolutionary' (I suspect he means it in the Simbian Army sense!) and that there might be a negative reaction.

G. And then he apologized. He felt he had not given me priority in creating task assignments; but that I was not uppermost in his mind. He did not confirm my suspicions that he had never received any 'sudden' requests for guidelines on para-professionalism!

More notes were logged on the interaction that specified the Agent's policy of wanting to guide the teachers to their own solutions, as opposed to their requests for "cookbook" directions. The advice given to the Field Agent for this was to compromise this principle. It appears that there had been no responses to the VSDE from the PBTE workshops because the teachers wanted "more than guidance [Director]."

D. Division of Federal Programs

While the raison d'etre for the Division of Federal Programs is mainly acquisition of funds, the Department deals directly with the field through its several programs. In addition to obtaining money through the manifold Federal Acts (e.g., Titles I, II, III), the Division of Federal Programs is involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs for which it has gained funds. Therefore, attendant administrative responsibilities are widespread, and many are delegated to the Department's Interns-in-Training.

1. Assignments to Interns-in-Training:

Since 1970, the Division of Federal Programs has coordinated an Administrative Intern Program for the VSDE in cooperation with the University of Vermont. The Program's purpose is for the VSDE to provide practical, on-site learning opportunities for potential Vermont school supervisory personnel. They are simultaneously involved with the theoretical aspect that is presented in the graduate program of the University. Program personnel also assist the VSDE and the local education agencies in economically providing needed services on a short-term basis.

The Division assigns its interns to administrate and complete specific projects. For example, for two years, two different interns, under Departmental supervision, carried out an entire program. These interns became the 'managers' of that program, an experience which compelled them to produce and to learn the process of working within the Department structure as well as in the field. This task involved developing a program that stayed within the guidelines of the Title (e.g., Title III requires innovative programs), plus its planning, implementation, and evaluation.

2. Interaction of the Field Agent with Interns:

The Field Agent was asked to serve as an advisor to an intern, and participate in the implementation and evaluation of one such program, "The Community Educational Agent," already in the 'pilot' stage in three communities. The intern was to serve as State Coordinator. The purpose for

funding the Title III "Community Educational Agent" concept was to create a more effective and more enduring method of stimulating change in the Vermont schools. Funding a Community Ecucational Agent was seen by the Division Director as funding a process rather than a program. The purpose for intervening was to trigger a grassroots level of commitment to educational improvements. Hopefully, this would produce a ripple effect thereby fostering changes in the schools. The Title III Community Educational Agent's role was to be the catalyst for change through a multi-directed communications process of articulating what school programs were, their unique needs, approaches, and available resources. The Title III Community Educational Agent's role was not to complete a program or to say what was best. The purpose rather, was to encourage, facilitate and to support a process of school-community interaction, thereby minimizing the estrangement of the general community from life inside the school. According to the Director of the Division of Federal Programs:

> It puts a person in the community, who communicates with the school about some of the community's concerns and needs and also communicates to the community some of the school's concerns and needs . . . That person is going to operate for one calendar year, in that community, between the local school and everybody else. They're just going to 'be there'; the eyes and ears of the school and community! They're an arm of the education community, but they are not going to be controlled by the superintendent. And yet, they've got to be responsible to the superintendent, who, in turn, has to be willing to listen . . . It's going back

> to the whole concept of 'sitting around the pot-bellied stove' and finding out what some of the problems are and being able to handle it [taped, logged interview with the Director of Division of Federal Programs].

The pilot phase of this program was considered to be among the high risk, innovative research projects for the Division of Federal Programs. Based upon the findings of the pilot year, the program could then be proposed as an exemplary project, aimed at incorporating the local Agent and the interactive process into the local system. The Director of Federal Programs, however, was interested as well in the long-term effects of the program. For example, in addition to measuring the impact of the project at the end of one year, it was desirable to ascertain whether the processes initiated by that community's Agent were still operational long after the termination of the initial year of performance (in effect, two years after the local Agent had left). In his instructions to the Vermont Field Agent, the Director explained:

> What we need is qualitative data, not quantitative . . . What we'd like to do is to bring in another 'mind' to work with us to assist us in thinking through some of these concepts . . . We have to sit down and talk about 'how' we are going to evaluate the process; not the program. How are we going to evaluate whether or not we're having any effect on programs? And how are we going to evaluate whether or not we're having effect through <u>this</u> concept of Community Educational Agent Program? Those are two important ones . . . Instead of using statistics, we are trying this other kind of approach. It's a simplistic kind of approach, but I think it'll help <u>people</u> . . . [Taped, logged interview with the Director].

Therefore, the Field Agent was assigned the task of observing and advising personnel, and devising what was referred to as the "summative" instrument to measure the qualitative effects of the "Community Educational Agent Program."

During the time the Field Agent worked with the intern and State Department personnel, numerous conferences were held. The immediate goals of the project were clarified in order to facilitate evaluation of performance. Data collection and collation were standardized. The training sessions for the new, Title III Community Educational Agents, to be conducted by the intern, were formalized. The Vermont Field Agent also operated on a 'hand-holding,' affective level in response to situations made volatile by contradictory, often confusing dictates and expectations of the Division Director. A log entry reveals:

> The last week was chaos for . . . Her orders were conflicting; she was not given much control of the Project as assigned and she threatened to quit. She then got the control as originally promised. Much relief--and confidence that she could carry it off. Lots of politics, 'pull,' ego-feeding, bureaucracy. Apparently, the training session was a bomb because of typical unexpected, without-warning State Department changes, but she'll fix it up with her individual follow-up. Possibility of one of these local Agents balking at the change of what he was led to believe to be the job concept as described in the original, misleading letter. She was eager to tell me about her feelings, experiences, and is sincerely seeking my assistance--both as confidante and advisor. I shall respect both roles.

In anticipation of the need for objective evaluation of the Community Educational Agent's performances, the Vermont

Field Agent also held meetings with an Anisa staff expert in Educational Measurement and Evaluation. The staff member was commissioned by the Field Agent to design the "summative" instrument needed two years hence. This task lasted until June, 1974.

3. Interaction of the Field Agent with other Federal Programs:

In addition to the assignment to the Community Agent Project, the Director of the Division of Federal Programs asked the Agent to attend a needs assessment conference in Woodstock, Vermont on January 24, 1974. The topic for discussion at this conference was the new definition of "educationally disadvantaged." Federal regulations and interpretations of Title I evoked certain problems. Criteria were now to be based on educational and behavioral performance according to grade levels, rather than family income. Two major areas of evaluation were reading and math. A child was to be classified as "educationally disadvantaged" if the child's performances in these skills were one or two grade levels below expectation. If such was the case, the child was entitled to remediation efforts under Title I.

At the Title I conference, eight out of 65 Vermont districts were represented. Attendees included personnel directors, curriculum directors, assistant superintendents, and State Department personnel. All were invited because

they had performed effective needs assessments in their areas, or they had relevant experience. The Agent was introduced as the "NEPTE Field Agent from Anisa." Unexpectedly, the Field Agent was then invited to make some impromptu remarks on the "Anisa way." A thumbnail sketch of the Anisa Model was presented by the Agent, highlighting individualization of instruction. It was pointed out that the Anisa approach emphasized measuring the child's performance against himself as opposed to the performance of other children. In other words, the measurement of individual performance directly depends on the uniqueness of his own development, not on standardized norms. Such an approach precludes criteria based on grade or age level norms.

A portion of the Agent's log entry for that day contained the following dialogue and personal comments.

VSDE Representative: It's all well and good to talk about what should be, but we have to deal with reality: and reality demands standardized criteria-referencing.

Agent: Yes, but if one puts a roof on his thinking now and hides behind an acceptance of someone else's dictated 'reality' it would be another Pygmalion in the Classroom, or prophecy fulfillment of limited expectations. There are developmental levels that may vary timewise, but are invariant order-wise.

VSDE Representative: Well, it was a nice plug for Anisa!

Personal Comments: 1-I was invited to talk about Anisa, I didn't volunteer!
2-What it boils down to is that my remarks are examples of wasted energy, inasmuch as the 'rule' has already been established by Wash-

> ington's definition of establishing a grade level standard for educationally disadvantaged.

However, at this Title I meeting, some overtures to the Agent were initiated by people in the field. Concomitantly, the Agent requested copies of successful assessments to submit to the State Department and to Anisa. Pertinent reminders were recorded in the log:

> 1-Get in touch with . . . (Director Pupil Personnel Services in Vermont). He wants to help in showing his teachers how to 'focus in' and clarify objectives. He sounds eager, excited about my comments!
> 2-Speak to Dan (Dr. Jordan) reevaluation by competencies in upper grades for Mr. . . .
> 3-Show . . .(Vermont)and Dan competencies given to me by . . .
> 4-Miss . . . wants competencies; . . .(Vermont).

Within the following week, letters were sent to these anticipated clients, requesting appointments in regard to their queries. The Agent did not receive any responses.

E. Division of Planning Services

The Planning Division concerned itself with the new directions in education that were guided by the philosophy of the Vermont Design. When the Agent began to work for the Planning Division, its Bennington Planning Project was in process. Members of the Bennington, Vermont educational community were, at this point, involved with setting priorities in goals and improvements, as suggested by the results of a random sampling within the community.

1. Interactions of the Field Agent with the Bennington Planning Project:

For the Division of Planning Services, Bennington, Vermont was to be the Field Agent's area of concentration. In this project, two phases were utilized for improving ecucation. Phase I had involved the community in ranking goals in terms of their perceived importance. To facilitate the establishment of priorities, the Planning Division had suggested the use of an instrument entitled "A Model Program for Community and Professional Involvement (1972) in a national educational magazine. The goals are quoted as follows:

Bennington Goals from Phi Delta Kappa

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A Model Program For Community and Professional Involvement

GROUP . . . . . SCHOOL . . . . . GRADE . . . .

SCORE

1. LEARN HOW TO BE A GOOD CITIZEN . . . . . .
2. LEARN HOW TO RESPECT AND GET ALONG WITH PEOPLE WHO THINK, DRESS AND ACT DIFFERENTLY. . . . . .
3. LEARN ABOUT AND TRY TO UNDERSTAND THE CHANGES THAT TAKE PLACE IN THE WORLD . . . . . .
4. DEVELOP SKILLS IN READING, WRITING, SPEAKING AND LISTENING . . . . . .
5. UNDERSTAND AND PRACTICE DEMOCRATIC IDEAS AND IDEALS . .
6. LEARN HOW TO EXAMINE AND USE INFORMATION . . . . . .
7. UNDERSTAND AND PRACTICE THE SKILLS OF FAMILY LIVING . .

8. LEARN TO RESPECT AND GET ALONG WITH PEOPLE WITH WHOM WE WORK AND LIVE . . . . . .
9. DEVELOP SKILLS TO ENTER A SPECIFIC FIELD OF WORK . . .
10. LEARN HOW TO BE A GOOD MANAGER OF MONEY, PROPERTY AND RESOURCES . . . . . .
11. LEARN HOW TO USE LEISURE TIME . . . . . .
12. DEVELOP A DESIRE FOR LEARNING HOW AND IN THE FUTURE . .
13. PRACTICE AND UNDERSTAND THE IDEAS OF HEALTH AND SAFETY . . . . . .
14. APPRECIATE CULTURE AND BEAUTY IN THE WORLD . . . . . .
15. GAIN INFORMATION NEEDED TO MAKE JOB SELECTIONS . . . .
16. DEVELOP PRIDE IN WORK AND A FEELING OF SELF-WORTH . . .
17. DEVELOP GOOD CHARACTER AND SELF-RESPECT . . . . . .
18. GAIN A GENERAL EDUCATION . . . . . .

Phase II was to assess the current effectiveness of these goals as they were, or were not currently being operationalized in the High School.

On December 11, 1973, in the interest of saving gas during the energy crisis, an historic, pilot, hour-long conference-call took place between the Director of Planning Services Division and members of the Goals and Objectives for Bennington Schools Committee regarding progress in Phase II. Newspaper reporters, and about fourteen or fifteen Department chairmen, coordinators, and teachers were gathered in a room in Bennington that was equipped with two-way loud

speakers for an inter-communication system. The Vermont State Department utilized a single telephone. This telephone conference-call was to be the Field Agent's initial contact with the anticipated clients. The State Department Director extended greetings to the Bennington personnel and responded to questions such as, "Where do we go after the first phase?" and "Can we be prepared for some unexpected responses?"*

The Agent was then introduced as "NEPTE Field Agent for Curriculum Development and Programming from the Anisa Project at the University of Massachusetts."* Without previous warning, the Agent was directed to "briefly" present the Anisa Model in order to bring about "a meeting of the minds"* between the Agent and the Committee as far as their "needs."* The Agent had never seen nor heard of the Phi Delta Kappa goals that were utilized by the Committee (Educational Goals Program, 1972). Thus, the Agent was forced into the role of speechmaker and 'teacher,' to an unknown, invisible, audience that was using unknown and invisible methods. The log notes accurately the remarks of the participants in Bennington that followed the extemporaneous Anisa presentation:

Teacher: It's impossible to take kids at a Junior High level who have been brought up in time-delineated, beginning/end steps, e.g., 'Now I've finished sixth grade; I go to seventh grade, etc.' and to change them to a continuous <u>process</u>! It's too

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*Log entries.

ideal. It's great for the young; not kids our age!

Agent: You're limiting them by your own view of kids. Their potential for this is infinite! Adolescence is an ideal age to do this. Kids love to argue and to learn--if it makes sense! These things do not happen overnight. A trust relationship must be established first; but if teachers don't cope with change, how can kids?

Teacher: Give me a specific way of achieving the goals in Phi Delta Kappa.

Agent: I dont' know those goals you refer to yet . . .

The log further reveals items the Agent felt to be pertinent to the Bennington Project and to the future interactions she expected to bring about:

Things to Remember:

-Stress the affective area. It seems this community places emphasis on social skills.

-Clarify that one does not "teach" a potentiality; one diagnoses, and is aware of those areas for total learning competence, e.g.: A child who dissects a frog should not have 'dissection' as the ultimate objective. It should be seen as a tool, or a means to attainment of higher order goals; like maybe interdependency of life and nature.

-The teachers are apparently skeptical of the Vermont Design. Threats of certification, approval, still govern their behavior. It is apparently the way they believe kids think too --(concerning 'change') like the Junior High teacher's remarks to me about change.

-Problem will be dealing with high school teachers. The attitudes in Bennington are consistent with . . . 's remarks [see p. 59, Chapter II].

-School Boards should be invited to attend conferences, or separate ones should be held for them, since they are an important part of local school administration.

Following the telephone conference, as a first task, the Agent conducted a Bennington fact-finding interview with members of the State Department's Planning Division. It was revealed at this interview that certain new administrative personnel in Bennington were struggling for acceptance in an area where the lay community was demonstrating negative attitudes towards its educational community because of "alleged money being spent," and because of a perceived lack of cooperation between school and community. According to State Department personnel, problems with the Bennington District were: (a) a need to meet with smaller groups to talk about ways of implementing the curricula that the teachers design; (b) a lack of an evaluation system within the school in terms of ways for teachers, students, administration, and community to voice opinions; (c) a lack of measurable objectives because of a conditioned reliance on 'time' as a basis of learning; (d) a question of delineated teacher objectives that were fragmented and, perhaps, inappropriate for student objectives; and, (e) the presence of certain confounding political complexities. The Agent then telephoned the Bennington Secondary Curriculum Coordinator and requested descriptions of the courses currently being offered in their high school. Motives for this call were to arrange for a personal appointment with those in the Bennington administration, and from the logical necessity to be fully familiar with a problem situation; that is,

well-prepared and 'interested.' Accordingly, reams of course materials were sent and studied, and on January 4, 1974, before the meeting in the field was to take place, a second conference in the VSDE was held. At this conference, the Agent praised parts of curricula being offered in Bennington. Such remarks were quelled by the Director, who remonstrated that establishment of complacency in teachers was ill-advised. The meeting in Bennington took place on February 6th. The Bennington administrator greeted the Agent by saying, "Tell me about Anisa." The scenario recorded in the log goes as follows:

> I swallowed my disappointment and described Anisa's point of view, keeping it, however, in the context of the curricula literature sent to me, and how various subject-contents could be integrated. I emphasized my desire to help in any way I can, i.e., my function was to 'be there,' as a general Field Agent in education, to advise, focus, suggest--in any capacity--when needed. In spite of the State Department, I commented on my high regard for the Social Studies in the History Department, whereupon he responded with a request for me to write a letter to that effect documenting my praise. He needs it for the local School Board, since they were giving him 'flack.' I assured him that I would be happy to comply, and the conference was closed with his request for time to digest all the information I had given him, and his certainty that he would call me to make specific dates.

The letter was duly sent within two days. That initial meeting in Bennington was the last contact the Agent had with the administrator.

2. Interactions of Field Agent with National Organizations:

Because of the Agent's affiliation with the Anisa Project, the Director of the Division of Planning Services

requested the Agent to arrange for Dr. Jordan, Director of Anisa, to be a keynote speaker at the weekend conference for The National School Boards Education Association (NASBEA) to be held in Vermont that year. In this way, the Agent, for NEPTE, the organization that sought regional cooperation and consensus, linked Anisa, a "worthwhile" project, to State Board Members from ten eastern states. The conference was held in May, 1974.

3. Final Assignments:

The Agent's last field assignment with the Planning Division was the first prolonged association with a client. On March 22, 1974, the Agent received information from the Director of the Planning Services Division concerning a high school beset by internal problems created by a January 1st, 1975 deadline for program changes. The school personnel had established their goals based on the Phi Delta Kappa survey taken months before,* but the Director of Planning Services revealed that they were lacking in clear directions. The Director invited the Agent to attend the committee meetings and to give a ten minute overview on Anisa in the hope that the school would want to meet with the Agent on a consistent basis for curriculum needs.

In addition to two State Department members and the Field

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*The Director of Division of Planning Services had recommended the same instrument to many areas.

Agent, present at this meeting were the high school principal, teachers, parents, a School Board member, and one student. The Agent was introduced as a member of the Anisa staff from the University of Massachusetts. This time, however, the Agent expressed a preference to be a silent observer initially.

It became apparent (a) that the members of this committee were bogged down in their imposed Phi Delta Kappa goals; (b) that they were dimly aware of their own basic problems; and, (c) that they needed assistance in gaining a perspective and giving conscious expression to the underlying question. The Phi Delta Kappa goals were, in reality, broad statements; they were not explicit specifications of curricula goals. As a result, exchanges in ideas were labored, and ruminations were circuitous. The setting of priorities within the Phi Delta Kappa goals spun aimlessly around the question of whether to develop character in children through a "teaching method" or through a "modeling" method.

The Director of Planning Services Division gave a lecture on staffing pattern definitions and their applications to effect change. Comments ensued, and the Agent remained silent until the one student attendee suddenly remarked to a stunned committee that "There was no place or no one to go to register 'gripes' such as teachers 'piling on' homework, or 'being mean.'" The Agent then offered an attempt to state the student's needs in another way. The view was presented that the primary goal of education was to make the student a

competent learner. When competency in learning occurs, instead of being controlled by others, one can be in control of one's own learning, hence one's own destiny. Such an achievement brings about self-worth, which is, in fact, a priority requisite in the character development the high school teachers seek to 'teach.'

The Anisa Model was not mentioned at all. But when the committee inquired about the origin of the Agent's illuminations, a request for the Anisa description followed. The discussion was directed to specifying perceived needs, since it was stressed that adequate decision-making and problem-solving can only be achieved after the problem has been clearly stated and agreed upon. The log records some of the needs that were finally summarized by the committee (April 8, 1974):

A-Problems:

1-More direction toward vocational education. Over 50% of the student body is non-college bound, yet, the curriculum is totally college-oriented.

2-Students are required to read Shakespeare when they are highly inadequate in their reading skills.

3-The above are truly institution-centered: not student-centered.

4-Students are non-verbal and disorganized in their thinking. They cannot problem-solve.

5-School is forced to run a 'babysitting' operation now.

6-Subject matter is seen as an 'end.'

B-Possible Solutions (to be competent learners):

1-Devise a flexible program to work with students' needs.

2-Have many choices for courses, with teachers serving as facilitators and guides for choices in courses.

3-Emphasize attaining logical,integrated thinking; not providing fragmented, unrelated fact-feeding.

4-Concentrate on problem-solving through competency, not through 'courses' geared for college and non-college bound.

5-Perhaps open bicycle-repair shop-child care services-materials workshop in wood for early childhood-design cities.

The Field Agent was aware of the importance of establishing a trust-relationship with clients. Cautiously, the Agent moved towards a long-range diagnosis as the school personnel became intrigued with the things they had heard about Anisa. The Agent wanted assurance that the committee members were interested in such an effort, and that they were prepared to consider seriously potential areas for change.

The next day, in spite of a heavy snowstorm, the Superintendent of the relevant high school District came to the State Department to relate the enthusiastic reports of the previous day's meeting. He announced that the committee had stayed on to work overtime on planning and needs-specification, and that they were eager to make further plans with the Agent.

From that first meeting in April, until summer vacation for schools in Vermont, individual conferences and plenary staff meetings occupied most of the Agent's time. The high

school principal, who participated enthusiastically, advised the Field Agent that the teachers, like most educators, had been over-exposed to meetings in which new programs, projects, and curriculum developments had been explained and endorsed. He cautioned that at this point they would probably display a major reluctance to getting involved with another 'new' program of unproved work, and that there would be the definite tendency on the part of the teachers to listen to such material with only half an ear. As a result, the Field Agent gave talks on the Anisa Model only when the steering committee requested them. This was consonant, in any case, with the philosophy and style of the Agent. The following log of a committee meeting was entered on April 23, 1974. Though lengthy, it is not presented in its entirety. It reveals client perceptions; thus, the bed rock of educational problems. The Agent had just spend 90 minutes in active debate over the Anisa Model's validity, approach, and implementation. Present at this meeting was the District's Superintendent who indicated a whole hearted approval of the process-oriented curriculum of Anisa. The log records:

> F-A music teacher has problems with his advanced music students who want instrumentation, and yet when they have it, are not motivated <u>every</u> day. Can Anisa reduce those numbers?
>
> 1-Answer: It's not possible to be on a 'high' everyday. We all have our moods. If a student is 'turned off', I'd find out why. Maybe he can achieve the same goal in another way that day.

2-Teacher: That's impossible, I can't let a kid not do something because he doesn't feel like it. He's got to . . . he's part of a group!

3-I retaliated that there is no such thing as equal education in equal amounts and time slots for all kids. The teachers' goals are to bring about competent learning, and the process to be used is differentiation-integration-and generalization. So what if the student doesn't act 'turned on' by an instrument everyday? The process can be applied with other means.

4-Teacher: School bands are necessary because of parents.

G-Questions at large.

What about kids 'turned on' in one class, and 'turned off' in another? Or, 'turned on' and the bell rings? Can Anisa cure this?

H-The principal says that all teachers, when interviewed for jobs, answer that they want to teach kids how to think; yet, when asked to elaborate--cannot.

Personal Comments and Problems:

1-How can I prevent 'bogging down' into specific subject matter treatment? The teachers are so 'skill-bound."

2-I spoke to . . .[music teacher]after the meeting, and I suggested ways of 'using' music for the process of differentiation-integration-and generalization. He said that was great for a general music class, but not for the advanced class in need of instrumentation.

3-I can respond to all of this, but the problem lies in too much interaction with one teacher while others want to go on! I'm positive even his advanced students do not see any relationship at all between music's ordering and patterning-and math, language, that they are all symbols, etc. And, I bet they never created!

4-In relation to my suggestion of subject integration, he told me of his bringing in an oscilliscope to show pure sound, and how his kids got interested in

vibrations. As a result, he went to the Physics Department for an integration (great!), but the taxonomies and orientations were so far apart that nothing was gained.

a.-I told him that commonalities can be found; first, by ordering the learning experience properly, and through interdepartmental pre-planning. Example: Vibrations can be demonstrated by using a 'spring' to show 'ways' (first approach is touching, seeing, manipulating)--then talking about it from a music approach; then Physics. That is, by delineating the different taxonomies, they reveal that they really mean the same thing.

b.-The important thing is to use it as a learning experience for those very differences that exist between the disciplines in articulating the same situation. Let the students pull it together (analogy-integration) and generalize it to the million other situations where this same problem occurs. It's all so unnecessarily fragmented!

5-Unless teachers recognize what they're doing (level of consciousness), they are nurturing the very things they talk against.

6-The Superintendent wants me to be sure to emphasize that the demands of society (e.g., Music,Science, Band, Reading, etc.) are not ignored by Anisa.

7-Important!--Teachers do not like to be told they are 'wrong,' or that others have the 'Truth' with a Capital 'T'.

8-How very important it is for me to be able to say I was once a classroom teacher!

At the request of the committee, the Agent arranged for the Director of Anisa to speak to the high school staff in its entirety. The Anisa Director, as noted, was a concert pianist. His lectures are uniquely 'concertized' with musical analogies. Professional, and classical musicianship, therefore, creates a memorable performance of the Anisa process. After this lecture, however, the Agent revealed and logged a

disappointment that the delighted reactions of the 'audience' were to the splendid talents of the pianist, rather than to the intellectual merits of the Model presented. This, along with all pertinent feedback, was duly reported to Anisa.

The log (April 16, 1974) notes a casual conversation between the Agent and a member of the Vermont State Department concerning the Agent's current field work and its relationship to the VSDE:

I-He expressed the unfortunate situation of people in educational administration.

A-Superintendents, principals, and State Department people are always thrown into a position of grasping for something that will make them 'look good'.

B-Thus, fragmented, superficial programs are often adopted because of their effectiveness for immediate, short-term appearances.

C-There is never any State Department follow-through on anything. The 'model' is usually 'blessed' by the administration and forgotten.

D-All State Departments have the same 'mystique'.

The Agent, in order to counteract such manifest 'indifference' (i.e., item "C", above), researched and compiled an annotated paper on relevant curriculum quotations from journal articles and newspapers. The commentaries were sent to the high school committee, ostensibly to serve as aid in establishing guidelines for their curricula development. The Agent's basic motives were, however, to create the feeling of an on-going, 'caring' relationship between the State Department and the high school.

The high school staff decided to have a full day's

in-service with the entire Anisa staff from the University of Massachusetts. At this workshop, it became obvious that the teachers expected the Agent, and the Anisa personnel, to solve their individual school problems with specific, 'on-the-spot,' 'cookbook' answers. The Agent's anticipated strategy was to develop rational ways for the clients to solve their own problems through the clarification of their own needs, and their abilities to control their own learning thereby creating a self-perpetuating situation. The Agent pointed out that the Anisa Model is a replicable Early Childhood Model, but its insights can be generalized to any level of education. Furthermore, the ultimate goal for any Project implementation should be towards its being permanently, autonomously sustained by its participants.

The process for negotiations for a three-year training arrangement between Anisa and the high school began with the high school teachers visiting on-site Anisa Projects in the field. There were teachers who were totally opposed to the undertaking because they were either concerned with putting in extra time for in-service, or they were comfortable with the present state of affairs.

It must be pointed out that in April, 1974, when the VSDE originally assigned the Agent to this task, the log shows strong State Department encouragement for this undertaking. The following months, however, during feverish interactions between Agent, Anisa, and the high school personnel, the log

indicates a subtle waning of enthusiasm on the part of the State Department Division of Planning Services members, which in June, ultimately degenerated to such 'grapevine' remarks as: (a) the Agent would be 'foolish' to become involved with this school because its [the school's] enthusiasm would characteristically lead to blame and quibbling once the hard part started; (b) the State Department wouldn't touch it with a "ten foot pole'; and, (c) the Superintendent of that District wanted to establish a reputation as an innovator and was probably "using" the Agent as a means to his end. Negotiations terminated after the Agent's contract expired on June 30, 1974.

F. Field Agent Problems

The relationship of the Field Agent to the Division of Planning Services was of particular significance because the Director of this Division coordinated the entire Field Agent project for the State Department. In the beginning, all Field Agent monthly activity reports were submitted to the Director for distribution in the VSDE. For specific assignments within this Division, as well as the other Divisions in the VSDE, the Field Agent first checked in with this Director. Schedules were confirmed and many communications were relayed through this Administrator. As a result, the Director of the Division of Planning Services assumed the added burden of serving as advisor to, and critic-, public relations man-, and confidante- for the Field Agent.

Interactions were constant. They varied in content from Field Agent activities, the Division, to the numerous problems engendered by the complexity of the NEPTE Field Agent Project itself. The log for this Division is replete with the personal comments, exclamations, and frustrations of the Field Agent that reveal the subtle undercurrents that strongly guided the Field Agent's perceptions, and behavior. The commentary reinforces the aforementioned NEPTE role requirements such as "living-in-the-crack," "having a tolerance for ambiguity," and the "need for possessing fully a belief in what she was doing" (see characteristics, Chapter I, pp. 33-34).

By the middle of March, about four months after the Field Agent Project's inception, the Agent had run the gamut of emotions. Pressures from an automobile based occupation became vexatious. The energy crisis was at its peak. Long distance driving (225 miles one-way) became even longer because of newly imposed Federal speed limitations. In addition, the Agent had been forced, on numerous occasions, to drive miles out of the way to find gasoline. More than once, personal appointments were unexpectedly changed to telephone conferences because gasoline service stations closed down without notice. Once, on a dark highway, the Agent's car ran out of gas.

Such strains were exacerbated by a creeping sense of job superfluity, a perceived covertness and indirectness in communications, and a role-conflict brought about by a myriad

of unanswered questions. Namely, the Agent had consistently sought, and had been equally promised introduction and support from the VSDE in the form of a public announcement of the newly created role to the field. None was forthcoming. The only affirmation that had ever appeared was in a publication limited in distribution to State Department personnel. Its contents offered the Agent's services to "department staff members." Furthermore, State Department Directors, without first consulting the Agent for clarification, were contacting the NEPTE and Anisa offices when their anxieties rose. One such occurrence took place in March, 1974. The Director of NEPTE made a telephone call to the Director of Anisa concerning a State Department person's comments that the Vermont Commissioner of Education had expressed dissatisfaction at never having met the Field Agent. The Agent had never been told, and therefore had not been cognizant of the Commissioner's desire. Added to these pressures, the reasons for the consistent, yet, perplexing initial requests to the Agent for a quick exposition of the Anisa Model, regardless of the context or situation, remained a mystery. The Agent had commented on her growing frustrations during the many informal conversations with the coordinator, but the Director usually placated with, "It takes time-you're doing a good job." On March 14th, however, the Agent insisted on a more formalized conference with the Coordinator. The log contains these notes:

....B. Conference with Coordinator.

Agent: 1-Here I am thinking I'm doing a 'super' job as Field Agent, working hard, doing as I am told, and now I'm getting indirect, negative vibrations. That is:

a-Why wasn't I told first that the Commissioner wanted to meet me? Why wasn't an appointment set up for me?

b-Why were other calls made without seeing me first to get the facts? Everything is so secretive!

c-Why had I been promised publicity on being a Field Agent, and had never gotten any?

d-Why haven't we had a meeting with the four Directors together to clarify perceptions and role confusion; and why does everyone insist on taking care of my correspondence within the field? Are they hiding me?

e-How can I handle things I don't know about-since all this is so easily resolved!

Director: 1-You are doing a good job-I'll attest to that. (Personal Comment: Does he say this to others?)

2-The contract calls for four days a week, and the Directors feel there isn't enough visibility. If you were around more there'd be more work.

Agent: The contract calls for four man days a week as Field Agent; not four days of visibility in a State Department! And, as a matter of fact, you are getting far more than four man days a week! For example, take the week of March 10-16th: on Monday and Tuesday, from 8-5:30 p.m., I began a solid reading of all early childhood models with a member of the Anisa staff, to be written and handed into. . . on Wednesday and Thursday I was here at the VSDE and on Friday, I was at the University holding separate conferences with five people concerning Vermont assignments. That's 13 man-days as well as overtime in hours.

Director: Well, this needs clarification, I agree with you. In answer to the public announcement you

requested from the VSDE, why put out publicity on a Field Agent when the job will be over in June?

Agent: The job will not be over in June! I will be 'over' in June, not the job. (The Agent had decided not to renew the contract.) Besides, I started work last December! If you felt that way, why was I constantly assured there would be publicity?

Director: 1-I'll try to arrange a meeting with the four Directors.

2-You should give me direct reports of everything you do, not just to the individual Directors and through monthly written reports.

3-I will call the NEPTE Director to straighten matters out and to give you a fantastic reference. You should not call them at all. (Personal comment: Why? Another secret?)

4-An appointment will be made with the Commissioner.

One week later, the Agent, the Project Coordinator, and Vermont's Commissioner of Education 'came together'. The log entry records (March 21, 1974):

1-Conference arranged for 10:30 a.m. Arrived at 9:15 and 'hustled' into Commissioner's office. Appointment changed without notice!

2-The first words out of the Commissioner's mouth were: 'What is Anisa? What's so different?' I was incredulous!

3-After I gave my 'speech,' his remarks were: 'What you are saying is that when you go out and talk to teachers and administrators, you talk to them about perceptions, human and physical interactions, and so forth?'

Agent:

4-Well, sir, that depends on whatever 'hat' I'm wearing, i.e., the Field Agent hat, or Anisa's.

It became apparent then that the Commissioner evidenced a

total misunderstanding of the position of the Field Agent. The Commissioner's question had revealed his sole perception of the Agent as an Anisa-proselytizer. The log goes on to note:

> I explained the types of hats that I can wear, but, in fact, that I am a general Field Agent first, (not an Anisa apostle), who works out of the VSDE, and who happens to have the Anisa expertise to help all levels in most things, either through my own efforts, or through the efforts of those on the Anisa staff. For example, I was requested to help in the para-professional area. I knew little about it except for my own personal experiences. Anisa hadn't taken a stand on it so I researched it, and asked the Assistant Director for help since he knew a lot about these 'unchartered' waters. That's being a Field Agent, not an Agent out to sell Anisa!
>
> The Commissioner had felt it could be 'threatening' or 'limiting' to some if I am the 'large concept' of Agent. He suggested that I meet with those in the field, and suggest 'what I can do for them,' not 'what can I do for them?' I explained that I could not do that. I was a 'responder' first and I had to know their needs as they saw them.
>
> The Commissioner said that the one thing they [VSDE] did not want was a person who 'floated' without any ties or structure--who was all over the State doing things without the VSDE knowing what was going on. That's why NEPTE was instructed that the Field Agent was to be in the VSDE, under directorship, working for them, knowing about the VSDE, and bringing in areas of expertise that weren't present in the VSDE.
>
> The conference took over an hour. It seemed that he was attempting to tell me things in an overly subtle manner. The upshot was that either I, or they, do not understand my role.
>
> I think the situation was clarified; but I'm really not sure! I imagine the feedback will filter in, one way or another, mostly through actions; not words. There are so many 'nuances'--rarely to the point!
>
> Interesting! It falls together for me now! When I went to Bennington, totally armed with facts about their curricula, I was asked to talk about Anisa. It was

exactly the same at all the other places. No wonder I've never been called back! Everyone, including the VSDE, thinks I'm a Model-seller!

1. Attempted Solutions:

When the meeting was over, the Project Coordinator and the Agent formulated future actions. It was decided that the Commissioner, through copies of monthly reports, should be informed of the variety of roles the Agent fulfilled. The Coordinator again stressed the need for more "visibility" in the State Department, while, at the same time, informing the Agent that "it takes time to be asked for." He counselled that "teachers and superintendents are proud and don't want to ask an outsider for help." The Agent reiterated that the State Department could alleviate the question of the problem of pride or embarrassment among teachers and superintendents by announcing to them the existence of a person hired specifically to perform such helping tasks in the field.

Publicity was never to be forthcoming. The meeting with the four Division Directors in the State Department was never held.

G. Summary

No experimental design based on logical considerations can be considered worthless or useful until subjected to rigorous testing in the field. In order to evaluate an innovative idea, however, the application of objectivity, and a receptive environment is required. In the actualization of a concept, positive and unrestricted cooperativeness must be maintained.

In the instance of the Vermont Field Agent concept, a variety of hazards surrounded the pathway to implementation. The potential traps were myriad in nature since the boundaries of a host of organizational structures and self-motivated personalities had to be crossed. The Vermont Field Agent was given specific assignments of diverse complexities at various levels of education and in different Divisional surroundings. The services performed were lost, however, because of a lack of understanding on the part of clients. The goal to improve the educational process was clear to all; the role of the Field Agent as an aid to achieve this goal was shrouded in darkness. In an attempt to illuminate and clarify the positive and negative interactions experienced by the Field Agent, a thorough analysis of the operation is given in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF THE FIELD AGENT ROLE IN EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT

PART I.

The role of the Vermont Field Agent in Education is a highly complex phenomenon, making analysis very difficult. The complexity of this unique role was increased by the network of agencies it served. Similar to the architecture of a tree trunk, the Divisional components of the VSDE and its educational field formed concentric rings of individual motivation, all bureaucratically encapsulated in a common protective bark. Whereas this bark of containment was readily stripped away to bare superficial factors of cooperativeness and resistance, there were deeper layers of uncertainties that were less susceptible to illumination.

Despite the short-lived personal experiences of the Field Agent in the present study (December 1973 to June 30, 1974), the duration of employment was ample enough to explore the complex interplay between Agent and clients. The central position of the Agent was both detrimental to and advantageous for analysis and evaluation. Observation of a setting of which one is part, is, to an undetermined extent, biased by the unique beliefs and ideology of the participant-observer. However, the analysis of the transformation of the Vermont Field Agent concept into an operative instrument is designed to allow the reader to assess its achievements and failures

with as little bias as possible.

In the previous chapter, the specific assignments made to the Field Agent and their disposition were presented. In the present chapter, the psychological, sociological, and political factors that were exerted on the performance of the Field Agent will be analyzed.

A. The Field Agent Role

There are at least three factors, which have a bearing on role expectations, to consider within the Vermont Field Agent Project: 1) NEPTE's original concept of the Field Agent; 2) the view of the program's major administrators (VSDE), and how they operationalized the concept; and, 3) the view of the program's practitioner (the Field Agent). All are dynamically interwoven by the overlapping and interplaying of their performances as dictated by their expectations. The activities of those who participated in the implementation of the Vermont Field Agent Project were, in most instances, discrepant with the original expectations as set forth by the proposing agency, NEPTE.

Cause and effect analyses of these discrepancies are based on data presented in Chapter II, the information from the relevant literature, and the Agent's own perceptions. The causes are shown to be the activities arising out of an inadequate understanding of the role, and therefore, a misapplication of the NEPTE Field Agent concept by the VSDE. Misunderstanding was compounded by the insecurities in VSDE

leadership positions and territorial ownerships that prevail in almost all of today's bureaucratic systems that unwittingly spawn the need for short-term, visible products and merits as a basis for work. It is also shown that this lack of understanding of the role of Field Agent can be associated with a basic naivete and fear of change itself. Fear of change is often the basis for a negative and restricted relationship.

1. Theoretical Viewpoints:

An initial consideration in designing an educational Field Agent project is the definition of the role to be performed. The Field Agent role is, as yet, generally less structured and defined because of lack of precedent.[8] At the moment, the functions of an educational Field Agent are 'unchartered' territory. The different names given to the role ("Field Agent," "Change Agent," "Linker"), and the variety of interpretations given to them further complicate the definition.

Havelock (1968) defines the Agent role as one of knowledge-linking: individuals who assume a variety of roles in maintaining some connection between the resource systems and the clients. He sees as one of the roles of change Agent,

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[8]The Agricultural Extension agent will be discussed in relation to the Field Agent notion in the next chapter.

a linker, who serves as a consultant in specifically assisting clients in the identification of problems, and linking them to the appropriate resources required to solve them.

Louis & Sieber (1972)[9] view the Field Agent as frequently helping

> the client to interpret the information, to evaluate its applicability to his special situation, and to consider the next steps required for use or for implementation. In addition to this strictly informational function, the Field Agent might try to improve communication between school districts, to consult in their own specialties, to inaugurate teacher workshops or in-service programs [p. 2].

Duncan (1972) defines a Field Agent as one who

> must establish a relationship with a client, diagnose the client (or client system), select the correct helping role, determine change objectives, deal with resistance to change, and maintain the changes [p. 1].

Rogers (in McClelland, 1968) defines "change agent, as a professional person who attempts to influence adoption decision in a direction he thinks is desirable [p. 3]." He also says "the change agent establishes patterns of maintenance among the recipients so that the innovation can be continued when his influence is withdrawn [McClelland, 1968, p. 8]." Provus (1969) theorizes that a Field Agent may be either "an advisor, an implementer, or an innovator [p. 14]."

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[9]These authors present the only other personalized study of the Field Agent concept that I know of.

For example, the Agent may act as advisor in response to the needs of the teacher as they are stated, limiting the boundaries of response only to that specific need. As an implementer, the Agent may act in response to the needs of the VSDE in the implementation of certain specific programs in the State. As an innovator, the Agent may be in charge of the development and diffusion part of a research program.

2. Organizational Conceptions:

NEPTE has conceived a definition that is an integration of the above perspectives, with added variables from its Director's intuition and experience, (see pp. 5-11 of the Introduction). In NEPTE's definition, the characteristics of independence, autonomy, and responsiveness become most salient. Because the Agent's views and those of Anisa's are consonant with NEPTE's, it is the concept of the latter organization, as yet unpublished, that serves as the basis for this analysis.

The important thing is that all definitions present the Field Agent as a person who has, as a major function, the advocacy and introduction of new concepts, procedures, materials or structures, into everyday educational usage. The Field Agent can link research and practice through referral or through testing, or can translate research findings into operational procedures.

B. Relationship Between the VSDE and the Field Agent

The implementation of any innovation, whether it involves an individual such as a Field Agent, or a social system such as a school, demands an understanding of certain basic principles by those who implement it. Stated simply, initiators must know: (a) 'what' the innovation is; (b) 'why' it should be implemented; and, (c) 'where,' 'when,' and 'how' to implement it. Unless these principles are understood, the innovation, or change, is short-lived and superficial.

The Field Agent role, as perceived by the VSDE, was one that conformed to none of the preceding definitions. Therefore the Agent was introduced into a situation where the need for an initial client-relationship with those in the State Department, itself, had to be developed.

1. Lack of Consensual Definitions:

a. Office Worker vs. Field Worker:

The Vermont Field Agent was perceived, and therefore used by some of the Department members, as a conveyor to, and consultant for[10] State Department personnel alone, and not the field clientele. In Chapter II, it was noted that time as well as services were allocated to the Directors of VSDE departments. Not only was the percentage of time allocated to each delineated in the three-way contract, but

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[10]Refer to Havelock's model, pp. 7-9, Chapter I.

the 'time slots' in days were designated by and for Department personnel. This arrangement reflected ownership attitudes on the part of the VSDE, and had the effect of precluding any independent field activities for the Agent. In addition, the single, printed, 'public' announcement of the Field Agent was limited in distribution to State Department personnel. It offered services only to those within the Department who might need them.

Individual Division assignments reinforced the rights-of-possession-attitudes entertained by the Department. As described in Chapter II, the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education assigned the Agent to a leadership committee whose meetings were held in the State Department building. When these meetings were terminated, the Agent was then given a research task to perform for another member of the Division. On February 20, 1974, the following comments were entered in the log:

> They are seeking ways to keep me occupied: they don't know what to do with me! If this is the case, then they are utilizing the Field Agent position as they do an intern-student or an office researcher.

This discrepancy in role definitions was discussed with the VSDE coordinator at lunch one day. He offered then, what was to be a prophetic utterance: "It will take a long time for the Agent concept to catch on."

The 'internal' work demanded by the Elementary and Secondary Division brings to mind the results of a short

questionnaire that Louis & Sieber (1972) sent to Field Agents, asking them to indicate the origin of their requests for services over the first few months of their programs. An analysis of the distributions of origins of request for each Field Agent revealed that the "modal group of clients represented the most recent status in education held by the Field Agent himself [p. 14]." That is, if the Field Agent had been a Superintendent before he became a Field Agent, then 40% of his requests were received from Superintendents; or, if the Field Agent had been a teacher before he became a Field Agent, then he received 47% of his requests from teachers (this did not remain consistent as time went on, however). Such a distribution revealed that it is probably easier for Field Agents to stimulate first requests from the group whose problems are more familiar to them. Also, because of this initial familiarity, the problems may be more interesting to the Agent. The Vermont Agent's preparation is in Early Childhood, but since the Early Childhood personnel in the State Department limited the Agent's services to research, there was no opportunity to serve clientele in the field.

The Director of Division of Federal Programs used the Field Agent as consultant for the design of a Departmental innovation. Tasks were assigned that were totally administrative and clerical. Therefore, the Field Agent was not a change agent, Field Agent, or initiator, but an individual who helped personnel within this Department by providing the

technical and practical assistance needed to develop and administer innovations that were planned by the Department personnel themselves.

b. Staff Employee vs. Independent Agent:

As an extension of this 'private ownership' attitude, and contrary to NEPTE's emphasis on the autonomous, "disinterested person aspect [p. 10, Chapter 1]," of the role, the Administrators of VSDE also perceived the Agent as an undifferentiated staff member whose duties and performances were to merge with and remain solely dependent on the dictates of authorities within the VSDE. The reader is reminded of the lengthy preliminary discussion between the Director of the Division of Continuing Education and the Agent on the state of affairs in the Vermont field [pp. 57-60, Chapter II]. The discussion placed emphasis on the need for an Agent to work with teachers in order to bring about thinking "on a little larger scale" and to "enable teachers to improve themselves [p. 58, Chapter II]." The Anisa Model was to be the practical analogue to the philosophical Vermont Design. However, the PBTE logistics meeting that followed, attended by the Directors of the Division, resulted, somehow, in a blocking of any unique contribution that could be made by the Agent as a Field Agent. Concerning the PBTE workshop, the instructions to the Agent were, in effect, to remain undistinguishable from the other State Department personnel and to carry out the same temporary tasks. Evidence of

attempts to maintain anonymity of the Field Agent was revealed further after the Agent tried to establish a trust-relationship with the PBTE group by assuring the teachers that the role of Field Agent was independent of the administrative hierarchy and therefore did not involve criticism or threat. For this alleged autonomy, the Agent incurred the wrath of the Directors. Castigation followed, along with instructions not to separate the role from that of the State Department. The same routines, they advised, were to be performed at the PBTE meetings as those of the other State Department personnel, and the Agent was not to seek a unique identity.

Such a posture is contrary to recommendations submitted by other Field Agents (Louis & Sieber, 1972). These recommendations indicate that a trusting relationship with clients is contingent upon a certain independence from superiors.

> An important aspect of building a trust relationship is to make the client aware that the Field Agent will not transmit certain types of information to the clients' superiors. This issue goes beyond the problem of mere skepticism. The problem of mere skepticism is more a matter of apprehensiveness. One Field Agent indicated that she thought it was absolutely essential to make clear in the beginning of the relationship, that the client's confidences would not be violated. And, the Superintendent with whom she worked agreed that one of the Field Agent's strong points was that she never 'tattletaled'; the teachers wouldn't accept her if she did [p. 33].

Quandaries within the Agent that arose from these experiences were resolved during the meeting with the Vermont Commissioner of Education at a much later date. His conceptualization of the Field Agent role yielded evidence that the

Commissioner himself did not have a clear image of the Field Agent concept as defined by NEPTE. The Commissioner's comments were revelations of the latent inconsistencies within the VSDE when he condemned Agents who fill a comprehensive role (the Commissioner's words were "the large concept of Agent [p. 97, Chapter II]"), as well as Agents who "floated [p. 97, Chapter II]." It is offered that such remarks by the Commissioner were attributable to at least two determinants: his judgement (and thus, the Directors in the VSDE) of what an ideal Vermont Agent should be; and his previous experiences that led to the formation of perceptions of Field Agents as they 'really are'.[11] It is postulated that the determination of the expectations of the new Agent by the VSDE related to the extent to which the Department members had trusted and interacted with such people in the past. The Commissioner's negation of a "floating Field Agent" was based on the Department's evaluation of the former Agent who had allegedly "disappeared for days at a time." The "large concept of Agent," perceived by the Commissioner to be "threatening," reflected his underlying conception of the Field Agent as one who should operate within discrete and controlled constraints. Thus, those within the State Department saw the Field Agent role in terms of

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[11] The reader is reminded that the author was not the first Vermont Agent.

"job descriptions" while, from NEPTE's point of view, the Agent was to be seen in terms of "relationships [p. 35, Chapter I]." The research findings of Field Agent recommendations support the NEPTE point of view (Louis & Sieber, 1972).

> Careful consideration should be given to the amount of freedom of action delegated to the Field Agent, and to the Department level of the system at which he is placed . . . the Field Agent role should be intrinsically non-bureaucratic if it is to be effective. That is to say, the Field Agent role must have a good deal of leeway in adjusting to the needs and idiosyncracies of the client and his setting [p. 22].

Ironically, the initial interview in Vermont, with the Directors of NEPTE, Anisa, the VSDE, and the prospective Field Agent, focused mainly on the Agent's commitment to 'directiveness' as opposed to 'responsiveness', and 'rigidity' versus 'adaptive flexibility' in field interactions. At that time, all VSDE personnel approved the choice of Field Agent because of their expressed need and preference for one who favored responsiveness and flexibility. The future performances of the administrators, however, were to belie such verbalizations. While NEPTE's Field Agent was to be "directly responsive to learner and teacher needs," "field-oriented," and "autonomous," the State Department members conceptualized, in reality, an Agent as one who was to be 'magisterial', 'skill-bound', 'desk-oriented', and 'hierarchically dependent'. Thus, consonant with the misconceptions they held, the VSDE personnel controlled the

Agent, and measured role effectiveness in terms of hours and days spent behind a desk. Like the Agent's predecessor, frequent and prolonged absences from the office were perceived as inappropriate behavior.

c. Project Salesman vs. Responder:

Most pervasive within the VSDE, and evident whenever the Agent was allowed in the field, was a perception of the Agent as "conveyor," whose sole function was to develop and diffuse a specific University-based R&D Model into the Vermont school system. The Directors of the VSDE consistently introduced the Agent in association with Anisa, thus initially manipulating the clients' perceptions of the Agent. At a PBTE workshop, the Director of the Division of Continuing Education introduced the Agent as "a person from Anisa." Later, this same Division leader apparently repeated this description to the Superintendent consulting on paraprofessionalism, since the actual meeting brought forth an initial, out-of-context invitation to speak on the Anisa Model (p.66, Chapter II). At the Woodstock, Vermont needs assessment meeting for the Division of Federal Programs, the Agent was introduced by the presiding State Department member as the "NEPTE Field Agent from Anisa." Also, in the Planning Services Division, during the Agent's first telephone contact with anticipated clients in Bennington, Vermont, the Director's introduction cited only Anisa as reference (p. 79, Chapter II). This pattern was repeated at

the conference with the Curriculum Supervisor in Bennington (p. 82, Chapter II), the High School Committee meeting (p. 84, Chapter II), and at the assigned meetings for the Director of the Division Elementary and Secondary Education.

2. The Problem of Limited Commitments

All the above factors changed the performance of the Agent from that of interacting with clientele in the field to that of an initial uphill struggle of building a relationship with those in the State Department. The VSDE personnel became, for the Agent, clients in need of conversion to a supportive, field-oriented conceptualization of the Agent's role before those in the Vermont field could become involved. Logically, those in the sponsoring Department, above all, first had to understand and acknowledge the meaning of the concept "Field Agent," before they could view the Agent as legitimate in the role of change. An Agent had to be accepted as a competent individual of their choice, whose tasks were to aid them, and in some cases, guide them in their alteration of educational structure and function in the field. It is one thing to bring in a new person sympathetic with new ideas, and with attitudes, training, and personality which will foster change in the human relations direction; it is another thing to use the person. Until those in the State Department perceived the Agent in this way, they were not going to introduce and to use the Agent as such. Without the one, there could be no other. As a

result, there was a malfunctioning in the implementation of the role.

All Field Agents generally agree that it is important to gain initial acceptance, if not enthusiasm, from top administration before proceeding to lower levels of the school system (Louis & Sieber, 1972). Among the number of ways in which characteristics and behaviors of people operate to influence the success or failure of an innovative effort, enthusiasm, personal commitment, and active support from the top leadership are the strongest forces for an effective change program (Louis & Sieber, 1972). The Directors within the VSDE, however, did not actively support a commitment to the NEPTE Field Agent Project at all. They gave the Field Agent no assistance or guidance whatsoever in publicizing the program, in spite of the Agent's expressed belief that the first issue was to 'announce' Field Agent services to the educational community in order to stimulate requests. Logically, the Agent assumed that the school personnel in Vermont could never be aware of the multitude of services available by the Field Agent, and the Field Agent team, if the Agent were rendered 'invisible' through silence of the spoken and printed word.

a. Indifference:

Lack of commitment was manifest by the indifference to, or eschewal of Agent services. Louis & Sieber (1972) report that the members within the intermediating

organization where the Field Agent is located "can either facilitate or hinder the role of the Field Agent in both major and minor ways [p. 18]." For example,

> One of the Field Agents situated in a regional office with several other educational consultants reported that a number of school needs were referred to her by other staff members. She could then follow up on these needs with the knowledge that there would be some client interest in the service. Another way in which staff members helped her to publicize the service was by recommending that certain persons get in touch with the Field Agent [p. 19].

The Vermont Field Agent was located in the building that housed every educational consultant on a leadership level. The Agent was rarely referred to the field, and no one in the field was ever referred to the Agent.

b. Marginality:

In addition to the absence of publicity and referrals, frank discourse with the Agent was anomalous. It became apparent that the Department culture generated 'closed communication' (see p.68,E,#3, Chapter II). 'Closed communication' meant Agent exclusion or marginality. The Directors spoke to one another about the Field Agent Project, or to the NEPTE Director; but rarely to the Agent. Havelock (1968) refers to the problem of marginality as one of the problems in linking roles that are endemic. He says that certain issues seem to keep coming up again and again. There are "problematic aspects in the linker role which run as themes through the discussions of function, coordination, institutional context, and so forth. . . . they can probably be

summarized under just two headings: 'overload' and 'marginality' [p. 106]." 'Overload' is having too much to do with too many people in too many places. 'Marginality' is recency. "Any role is marginal when it is first created and developed [pp. 108-109]." Thus, in Vermont, where a concept of Field Agent was newly emerging, one would expect more difficulties related to marginality. Anyone, according to Havelock, who has a new job is marginal to the organization; and if the job itself is newly created, it is just that much more of a problem. It is compounded by suspicion, by various persons and groups who feel infringed upon (e.g., role conflict), and by others who are in the same roles but seem to be behaving very differently (e.g., role consensus). Such marginality of the one who holds the role means stress, which, when added to the stress of overload, results in a completely untenable position. "Nobody will get in it and nobody will stay in it [Havelock, 1968, p. 110]." Although the Directors may have had some ideas of their own about the development of a Field Agent role, the Field Agent was not made aware of these ideas except through circuitous channels.

c. Inconsistency:

Conflicting communications, with one point of view given to the Agent and an opposing view to those in the field, naturally subverted the effectiveness of the role and engendered for the Agent a doubtful status. Examples abound. (a) The Agent was given a "carte blanche" to help

a local administrator towards the solution of problems in the area of para-professionalism. Without informing the Agent, however, the same State Administrator who bestowed the "carte blanche" sent a communique to the local Administrator which completely contradicted and negated what was said by the Agent. (b) The Field Agent was instructed to assist the "Bennington Project" Superintendent with curriculum development. The "Bennington Project" Superintendent requested the Anisa story; not curricula exploration. (c) A Director from the State Department invited the Field Agent to respond to the needs of a high school. The Director later told the Agent that she was foolish to involve herself with them.

Many attempts at confrontations with the Directors about such discrepancies were made, resulting in consistent diversion of blame to the attitudes and style of the "Vermonters out there." The stereotyped 'Vermonter' was dubbed the cause of any conflict in communication; not the personnel in the State Department. That is, while the Directors verbalized strong support directly to the Field Agent, their encouragement was counter-balanced by such 'benevolent' admonitions as, "never take Vermonters at face value, since there is always a huge discrepancy in what they say and in what they feel." .....The Directors of the VSDE are, indeed, 'Vermonters.'

d. Vulnerability:

It is possible that the VSDE members and the Field Agent came to feel threatened by one another's presence. Both the present Field Agent and her predecessor were based in this complex, bureaucratic organization, performing roles that were ill-defined. Therefore, the role ambiguity could have led to a status ambiguity. The VSDE Directors saw themselves as the managers of change and in sole possession of leadership positions. The Field Agent's services could have, in fact, been perceived to overlap to a certain degree with the services being offered by the Department. This could have aroused an indignation within the Department personnel. All innovations were State Department mandated, prescribed, and in process long before the new Agent came on the scene. A psychological wall of defense could have been built.

> Each of us sees the need for change of the problems and issues involved somewhat differently. The positions we hold, the tasks we perform, our career goals and personality factors-all these play a part in how we perceive and react to change... most individuals feel more comfortable in continuing an established routine, or using familiar methods of instruction or control than they do in experimenting with new methods for breaking established patterns [Becker, 1973, p. 193].

The major threat of the new role of Field Agent, established and defined by an outside organization (NEPTE), and activated in an institutionalized setting (VSDE), could have been that it directed attention (whether in reality or imagination), to a 'need area' not being filled by the existing agency (VSDE). Also, the 'intrusion' of the new

role might have appeared to bring about a reallocation of claimed territory. The log on April 11, 1974, alludes to such ubiquitous vulnerability in the VSDE:

> 1. I had a telephone conversation with . . . [a non-Directing member in the State Department]. He suggested that I 'move slowly' and that I let the impetus come from . . . [a Director]. This obviously has to be a total State-Department-enterprise with the Directors getting star billing! There are intra-departmental undertones of jealousy and insecurity of jobs. It is advisable to innovate or to implement solely under the names of the Directors to insure stability and security for them and to lessen chances for conflict.

The inconsistencies and insecurities within the VSDE engendered feelings of mistrust within the Agent as well as a definite cynicism in attitude. Erikson (1963) advises that the ingredient of trust is essential to the effectiveness of any innovation that is supposed to bring about improvement. Mutual trust must either directly or indirectly relate to aspects of any interaction if there is to be credibility, openness, and cooperation--especially if the relationship is to lead to one's eventual acceptance and adoption of an innovation.

C. Biased Field Perceptions

A major component in the success of the Field Agent role is that of attraction, or magnetism. In order to interact with clients, the Agent must first effect an initial convergence with them. It was expected that the Vermont Field Agent's sphere of activities was to encompass the entire State of Vermont, with those in the VSDE "setting the stage"

by their introductions of the Field Agent to the potential clients. Like a lodestone that can be placed in a field of metal, or a forest of wood, the rhetoric of the administrators could galvanize, or render impotent the Field Agent's power of aducement. When the Agent was publicly identified with NEPTE, there was no reaction from those in the field, since NEPTE's professed overall style is to maintain a low profile. The constant reference to the Anisa affiliation, however, had profound implications.

1. Anisa Agent:

While many people in Vermont had been exposed to the Anisa philosophy through presentations from the Anisa Director, the Vermont State Department's consistent linkage of the Field Agent with Anisa could have aroused within the clients reactions to what they perceived as another attempt by the State Department to 'use them' for field-testing another Model. The Field Agent was probably identified with (a) a commercial organization, or, (b) a University-based research project; both of which, from the past experiences of teachers,would certainly serve as a basis for questioning the desirability of a Field Agent.

As a result of a commercial identification, the client can feel that the Agent, through the State Department, has been trying to give them 'a hard sell'. In Bennington, Vermont, for example, the Agent had the definite feeling that the request for the Anisa story was superficial,

out-of-context, and purely in response to an image of the Agent that was created by the State Department Director. It was obvious that the Bennington Administrator had no burning interest in Anisa. He was in need of an immediate product. The reader will recall that when the Agent attempted to change the focus back to the praiseworthy Bennington curricula, the Superintendent promptly asked the Agent to write a letter to the local School Board indicating such curricula approval. It was obvious that the Administrator was undergoing community harrassment and, therefore, suffering from job insecurity. He needed some immediate, concrete evidence of support, and saw the letter as a possible solution towards building a positive reputation. The Agent wrote the letter, both because of a sincere affirmation of the curricula and because the Agent saw the letter as a key to beginning the necessary relationship; but to no avail on either count. While it is true that as needs are specified, their solutions should not be approached on a fragmented basis, it is nevertheless important to first respond to the immediate, specifically articulated need before plunging into a lecture on Models for comprehensive change. Cooke & Zaltman (1972) propose ". . . that as the change agent . . . is perceived to be relevant to and can help alleviate the needs of the school, the practitioner will be willing to cooperatively interact with the Agent [p. 22]." A client will cooperatively interact with a Field Agent only when the

need is perceived and originated by him, and only when he feels an inability to alleviate that need himself. But when the question of change is imposed on him on a grandiose scale (such as a comprehensive Model presentation), the imposition serves as catalyst to more confusion and insecurity for the client. The Vermont Field Agent was most assuredly forced into such an appearance of 'manipulator', or 'salesman', by the consistent prologue of association with a Model to over-exposed skeptics in the field. The teachers are suspect of 'package deals' and 'saleable products'. The comments to the Agent by the VSDE Directors and the High School Principal attest to this (see pp. , , Chapter II), and yet, the Agent was introduced as the "Anisa person." Baldridge and Associates (1974) refer to changes in educators' attitudes that are significant to this:

> In the last decade teachers, administrators, and other educational personnel have become increasingly aware of their professional status, reinforcing it by developing their own skills and organizing their own power bases, often in labor unions. Historically, many educational professionals in schools felt overshadowed and out-classed by the supposedly heavyweight intellectual from universities, and researchers could command cooperation through the mechanism of status, prestige, and the aura of 'science'. . . . As one of the teachers in San Francisco phrased it, 'We're tired of academic arrogance, the holier-than-thou mentality of the hotshot from the university who comes out to save the schools' [p. 702].

No longer does the teacher weakly submit to something simply because it comes from a university. Furthermore, highly relevant to client acceptance is the Model itself. The Anisa Model is a complex, comprehensive paradigm that

reflects 13 years of intensive research. Its complexity and depth make an initial presentation relatively difficult to understand. As McClelland (1968) counsels, when 'forcing' an innovation, it is hopelessly naive to believe the following aphorisms:

> A good product will succeed on its own merits, or, stated differently, information is sufficient for change or, a solid research report that contains implications is all that is needed. It will convince the client system of the wisdom of adopting the stated or implied action [p. 3].

Anisa is always well received. People respond to what they hear, but on an intuitive level at first, since the content has great intellectual force and demands.

In addition, making changes of the Anisa-type requires, for the most part, teachers to 'unlearn' in order to 're-learn'; that is, to give up highly overlearned ways of thinking in order to learn new ways of conceptualizing. That is why the Anisa staff limits implementation of the Model to those who have participated fully in the decision-making for its incorporation.

> As with any model, an R&D model is not entirely wrong; it simply attracts attention to the wrong variables. Concentrating on engineering the invention lulls us into seeing the consumer as a 'tabula rase.' He is not. Acting on it prompts us to establish change agents to feed products to practitioners. The products do not go down well [House et. al., 1972, p. 12].

When any commercially perceived Model is 'force-fed', and, more specifically, out-of-context; the response evoked

has to be apathetic or defensive. The VSDE, in its interpretation of the Field Agent role, brought about a perceived imposition of the Anisa Model on those in the field; while Anisa, the Field Agent, and NEPTE, as argued in the conference with the Commissioner (p.97, Chapter II), all regarded the 'responsive' role as primary to educational change; not the forceful one. The Field Agent was expected to use Anisa expertise when it was relevant to her response to clients; she was not expected to 'sell' the Model.

2. Caricature of Academia:

There are other implications that relate to a university-based interpretation of the Field Agent role besides the manipulative, commercial connotation. In the field mythology, the researcher or, in this case, the Field Agent, is often seen as an unfeeling 'egg-head' with computer printouts in hand, who advances impractical, useless theories to schools populated with random samples. Breaking down this conception is extremely difficult. The Woodstock, Vermont incident confirmed such field perceptions (p. 75, Chapter II). The field response there was that the Field Agent "had a lot of nice theoretical ideas" but the relevance to practicality could not be seen. Similarly, the teachers in Bennington, Vermont revealed the same skepticism in applying such idealistic procedures to a classroom (pp. 79-80, Chapter II). Related to this are Cooke & Zaltman's (1972) observations that:

> Communication credibility research has indicated that the receivers' perception of the speaker's competence is influenced by perceived similarities regarding values, interests, needs, and status. A factor that influences the receiver's perception of the reliability of the field agent is his character in terms of the value system of the client listening [p. 35].

And Sarason (1971) zeros in on how the value system can be perceived as being 'at odds' with one another when he says ". . . outsider's sub-culture [university] inevitably affects and distorts the way he looks at a school culture [p. 2]." Sarason (1971) points out another implication for a university-based identification, and that is the threat that it might cause to the security of the Administrator in the field:

> The relationship between the principal and the specialist [Field Agent] is unlike that between principal and teacher in that the specialist is expected to have knowledge and skills not possessed by the principal. . . . The principal, however, being acutely aware that it is his school and he bears responsibility for what takes place in it, feels a strong need to know what the specialist will do, and he feels even a stronger need to decide whether or not the recommendations of the specialist should be implemented and in what ways. A person with the greatest amount of power [the principal] is dependent on a person with greater knowledge and skill. Although this type of relationship does not necessarily have to result in conflict, it frequently does . . . [pp. 127-128].

The principal expects and wants "his school" to bear the stamp of 'his conception' of what a good school and a good education are. He wants to be and to feel influential; not subordinated to a person with a different locus of expertise.

It is posited that, in fact, researchers and practitioners

often do not speak the same language because of their operating styles, perceptions of issues, and professional priorities. Authentic differences can exist, and will continue to exist. Baldridge and his co-workers (1974) say, "Increased and improved relations are definitely needed between R & D specialists in universities, research centers, and educational laboratories on the one hand, and the field user in public schools, State agencies, legislatures, and colleges on the other [p. 701]." The authors present problems both imagined and real, that exist as barriers between R & D efforts and field users (see Figure 3, p. 127).

Indeed, there can be discrepancies between an Agent's views and those of the teachers in the causes of and solutions to problems. In this case, however; (a) the Agent's former status as classroom teacher provided experiences to bridge across such possible gaps; (b), the role called for cooperation and collaboration with those in the field; and, (c) Anisa is a field-oriented, flexible Model. Had the Field Agent notion been operationalized according to expectations, the opportunity for improved relations could have been possible. But the initial identification of the Field Agent with a University-based educational Model compromised her objectives.

D. Internal vs. External Agent

The administrators within the VSDE were given an initial choice of the kind of Agent they wanted. The original NEPTE

Figure 3

Table 1

The Realities and Myths Separating Researchers and Field Users

A real difference in:	Is blown into a stereotype:
Time perspectives:* Researchers are looking for long-term payoff, while field users need solutions to immediate problems.	Researcher = "1984" dreamer Field user = short-sighted person
Experimental control: Researchers need to control as many factors as possible, while field users must deal with full complexity of ongoing situation.	Researcher = unfeeling manipulator, data shuffler, computer-bound robot Field user = do-gooder; fuzzy and emotional thinker
Problem definition: Researchers are seeking to prove basic social science propositions, while field users want daily practical problems solved.	Researcher = head-in-clouds, ivory tower intellectual Field user = nonintellectual, nose-to-grindstone peon
Policy orientation: Researchers try to design efforts to affect general social policy, while field users want more local issues addressed.	Researcher = theoretical world-changer Field user = user of stop-gap measures, with Band-aid mentality

*underlines replace authors' italics. [Baldridge, et al, 1974, p. 703.]

proposal (NEPTE Field Agents, 1973) indicated that "The Field Agent had to be acceptable not only to NEPTE but to the employing State as well, . . . No Field Agent was employed who did not have the full endorsement of the State with which NEPTE would be sharing the time [p. 3]."

The VSDE had elected to take on a Field Agent for a second time. Within the boundaries of their own conceptions of the Field Agent role, the Directors could have chosen a Field Agent from within their own system (an "internal agent"), who would have been, perhaps, non-threatening; but they elected to utilize someone from outside the system (an "external agent").

There is much research on the psychological effects of an external and internal Field Agent. Researchers hypothesize that external change agents are associated with more conflicts. Scurrah, Shani & Zipfel (1972) refer to the greater level of threat to harmony, authority, structure, and overall effectiveness of organizations when there is an external Agent. Their findings are the results of an experiment they set up of a simulated educational organization, in which the implication of using an external- versus an internal-change agent were examined. An hypothesis they tested was: "The perceived level of tension between the Dean and the Associate Dean will be significantly higher in groups where the Associate Dean is an external change agent than in groups where he is an internal change agent [p. 117]." The evidence showed that the external Associate Dean, although he was more influential than the internal Dean, did not pose a threat to harmony. The external agent, because he was viewed as an

expert, was given sufficient authority and legitimacy to enact his role without much conflict from the Dean. The important implication of these findings is that "an innovation is best introduced by an outside expert with the full support of higher management [p. 120]." Thus, perceptions of the Agent of competence and legitimacy are crucial for the role of Field Agent, since the innovations introduced will be more readily acceptable. These findings are in response

> to those who say that significant change depends on the impetus generated by an external agent. They argue that only a skilled outsider-consultant can provide the perspective, detachment, and energy so necessary to effect a true alteration of existing patterns [p. 115].

The Directors in the VSDE could have chosen an internal Field Agent who, temporarily or permanently, could have occupied the Field Agent's role. In addition to less conflict, researchers speculate that if the Field Agent comes from within the system, he might, at least initially, have a more thorough understanding of the resources available. Louis & Sieber (1972) report on a Field Agent who claimed that the knowledge of the availability of packaged educational material was most helpful in her initial efforts. They describe another Field Agent who began sending lists of available packages to people who had been relatively uninterested in her program and found that many of these individuals who were unresponsive to a discussion of their particular needs, appreciated receiving and discussing a package. Unfortunately, the Vermont Field Agent was in the system for six months before she accidentally overheard a conversation about "Learning Experience Packets" (LAP) and

Educational Resources Center (ERIC) Search materials available in the Department. Prior to this, the Agent performed intuitively along the dimensions cited by Louis & Sieber (1972) before the availability of the Vermont LAP's became known to her; but the accumulation of relevant material was at considerable expense of time and effort.

The internal Field Agent, as well, has some advantages in knowing those in the system and, therefore, knowing the key, influential people in the client system who might be the initial change targets. The Vermont Field Agent had to spend a good deal of time probing this through personal and casual conversations with people at all levels of the State Department hierarchy. Since responses, however, were necessarily limited to administrative perceptions, they were inconsistent, conflicting, and biased.

Scurrah and Associates (1972) offer additional advantages in the choice of internal Agent:

> Advocates of the internal model argue that the insider possesses intimate knowledge of the client system that the external change agent lacks. In addition, the internal change agent does not generate the suspicion and mistrust that the outsider often does. His acceptance and credibility are guaranteed by his organizational status [p. 115].

This Agent believes the contrary to be true. The internal Agent, as an insider, may be seen as being less objective because she has more stakes in the change, as opposed to the more objective and professional motives for involvement by an external Agent. Also, the internal Agent may have less outside resource contacts. Although there is the risk that

the external Agent may be seen as an outsider, it is still more likely that the Agent will be in a better position for effectiveness, because the external Agent is likely to be seen as more objective, more experienced, more resourceful and thus, more professional (Beckhard, 1969; Duncan, 1972). The Vermont Agent believes that her 'imported status' was mainly responsible for the candid, explosive reactions of the teachers, in her presence, at the PBTE workshops (p.61, Chapter II). The situation, however, was confounded because the Agent, while external, was denied any autonomy from the VSDE and, therefore, in part, was stripped of the advantages of the objectivity that might have been perceived by others.

In speculating, the Vermont State Department Directors may have chosen an external Agent for many reasons: (a) they may have perceived themselves as Directors who were 'open' to outside suggestions; (b) they may have wanted an external Agent to counter balance their "Helping Teachers" (internal Agents); or, (c) the choice of internal versus external Agent, and the related advantages, may never have occurred to them in the first place.

The "Helping Teachers" concept in the State of Vermont had been already institutionalized (see p. 64, Chapter II). If the new Field Agent role had been sanctioned by those in the State Department, it is possible that such an act could have been interpreted by the "Helping Teachers" as a

threatening role redundancy. A State Department "activities" paper (Activities, 1974) describes "Helping Teachers" as

> Regional Consultants . . . one of whom is stationed in each of the five regions of Vermont, [who] make on-site visits to schools to assess their elementary programs and to assist in upgrading their programs as they relate to the educational needs of their pupils [p. 1].

An external agent, however, in collaboration with the internal "Helping Teachers," could have constituted an ideal situation in Vermont. Duncan (1972), in his discussion of criteria for choosing change agents, says that the optimum change agent role employs the agent-team concept by using both internal and external personnel, and by utilizing agents with great similarity to other members. In establishing criteria for types of change agents in changing educational organizations, he concludes:

> It appears that we could specify the ideal change-agent as follows:
> 1) . . . the change agent team had, in general, a clear advantage over the single change-agent. . . due to the fact that the team simply had the potential for having more resources and a better division of labor.
> 2) The composition of this team should consist of:
> 1 . . an internal and external change-agent. The external change-agent brings a certain degree of objectivity and broader perspective to the client system. An internal change-agent can compliment [sic] this with his understanding of the system. The internal change agent is also, by virtue of being in the system, in a better position to help maintain the changes that take place [pp. 26-27].

The potential in Vermont, therefore, could have been perceived as infinite in conforming to the "optimum change-agent role," since the Field Agent was (a) an external Agent, (b) backed

by a team, (c) who could have worked with the "Helping Teachers" (internal), had she known about them and been given the freedom to do so.

It appears then, that for the purposes perceived by those in the VSDE, the choice of an external Agent was naive. The consistent, proffered rationalizations to the Agent of the stereotypical, suspicious 'Vermonter' were revealing. The Directors chose an 'outsider', and followed this choice with warnings that 'Vermonters' suspect 'outsiders'. These comments, as well as 'grapevine' declarations of the job insecurities suffered by their field administrators (i.e., Superintendents and principals) may have originated in the Directors' self-perceptions. In situations of failure or crisis it is much easier to project blame outward than it is to implicate one's ways of thinking and the consequences for its actions.

E. Summation

The points that emerge then, find their origins in the VSDE Directors' vagueness, hence misinterpretation and misapplication of the Field Agent role. Not only were there inconsistencies within the minds of each Director as to what a Field Agent should be doing, but there was little consensus between NEPTE's conceptualization (thus, the Agent's) and those within the VSDE. These discrepancies became a major source of tension for the Directors and for the Field Agent.

The role confusion within the VSDE lead to a guarding of administrative power, which was characterized by indirectness and inertia in Director-interactions with the Field Agent. The role misinterpretation also distorted the Directors' representation of the Field Agent to the field, and prevented the Field Agent from establishing a unique identity. According to Havelock (1968)

> Identity comes from the awareness by the linker, himself, and by those with whom he deals that he is somebody: somebody who does something not only valuable but clearly distinguishable from what other people do. . . . identity is something each individual has to achieve by himself through his own labors, but in face-to-face interactions[12] with others, . . . and through reactions to their actions . . . This is an especially severe problem when we are attempting to introduce <u>new roles</u>,[13] and when we are attempting to introduce roles which overlap and interconnect with well established existing roles [such as those in VSDE] [pp. 103-104].

Inherent in this particular Field Agent's role was the problem of serving many masters, (NEPTE, Anisa, and four Directors), each beset by unique complexities. While expectations involved being "mastered by none," this situation exposed the Field Agent to criticism from all directions and to ambiguity from all sides. Many of these conflicts

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[12] The reader is reminded of the Agent's introduction <u>by telephone</u> to the Bennington Committee, p. 79, Chapter II.

[13] Author's underlines are italicized in the original.

could have been avoided if the Field Agent, and the Directors, together, had achieved some kind of internal consistency in the design through the clarification of behavioral patterns and responsibilities. It is reasonable that collaboration and cooperation are important elements in any developmental strategy. With confrontation and continuous, benevolent feedback, a common ground for understanding and perceived goal consistency might have been effected. Furthermore, as the perceived goal consistency increased, there might have been a concommitant increase in cooperation and collaboration. It shall be shown that the relationship formed between the VSDE personnel and the new Vermont Field Agent was to be identical, both in cause and effect, to the interactions of the Directors with their educational field.

The reader is urged to consider that experimenting with an innovation for a short time is unlikely to reveal much about its merits. On the surface of things, one would assume that systems having change agents, or change agent teams, would be more highly committed to decisions for improvement than those where there is no such collaborative mechanism for change. The Vermont Design, The School Approval Paper, the Federal Program's Educational Change Agent, and the Early Childhood Projects are indeed manifestations of a surface commitment to change. But it is the Field Agent Concept and its implementation that must be assessed first in the light of its chances for success or

failure in the State of Vermont. And, because of the major discrepancies in definitions of the Field Agent role in Vermont, other related factors followed as natural extensions. While such discrepancy information might have been used to redefine the process and the relationship of the process to the expected goals, it was not. It is hoped that this dissertation may still accomplish this.

PART II.

A. Relationship Between the VSDE and its Education System: Implications for Field Agent

There is a high correlation, both in cause and effect, between the relationship the VSDE Directors established with their Field Agent, and the relationship the Directors established with those in their educational field. The cause of both relationships rests with the Administrators' basic barreness in awareness of the process of change itself. The effects of both relationships were, in part, frustration, mistrust, and cynicism.

An analysis of the Administrator-field interactions is critical to the assessment of the role of Vermont Field Agent because the reactions engendered in the field were, in fact, generalized to the Agent who was 'housed' in the VSDE, and therefore identified with its members. Louis & Sieber (1972) emphasize that

> effectiveness of the organization in supporting the role of Field Agent is premised on two basic

> considerations. In locating the Field Agent in an agency, care should be taken not to place him in a center which does not have a history of good service relations with local educators.* Whether or not the Field Agent is sufficiently independent of the organization, the client group will often identify him with it. The organization must be willing, not only to accept, but to give strong support* to the Field Agent role, both in terms of publicity and of gaining access [p. 20].

Havelock (1986), too, points out "how the linker is judged and how well he is welcomed will depend greatly on the image of the organization of which he is seen to be a part [p. 104]."

Like their Commissioner of Education, whose expectations of the new Field Agent were imputed in part to his past experiences with agents (p. 110, Chapter III), so it was for the teachers in the field, whose expectations were based on their past experiences with the administrators with whom the Field Agent was located.

The following therefore, is the macrocosmic view of Vermont educational relationships congruent with its microcosm within the Department.

1. Psycho-Social Dimensions:

People behave only in terms of what seems to them to be so. Their behavior towards one another is a direct result of their self-perceptions and of what each believes the other is like. Whether the relationship involves two people, or people from two systems, the performances of the

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*The underlines are this author's.

participants may be explained in terms of the interactions they have with each other in the specified situation in which they are observed to operate. In this case, the situation, or environmental stimulus for those in the field, was the attempt of those in the VSDE to introduce and to implement the Vermont Design. There were psycho-social dimensions that were produced within this context that were dichotomous and conflicting.

a. Mistrust vs. Trust:

"Teachers do not believe the State Department's willingness for individualized program improvement." ..... "We are tremendously concerned with the lack of credibility and mistrust between teachers and the VSDE." These 'effects' are the disclosures of a Director within the VSDE (pp. 57-60, Chapter II). "Don't commend the curricula in . . . because the teachers might get too complacent." This 'cause' was uttered by another administrator in the VSDE (p. 82, Chapter II). That same Director strongly disparaged a high school and its district Superintendent long after the Agent had been sent to work with the personnel. When 38 letters were sent to educators outside the VSDE for participation in the Blue Ribbon Study Group (p. 51, Chapter II), four letters were sent to teachers. It is significant that none came. Such behaviors do not represent an 'ideal' relationship between those in the field and their top administration.

The Agent's log entries from the PBTE workshops are

replete with teacher revelations such as: "teachers...angry about pay scale...overcrowded classes...too much work... bitterness...not trusted...power plays...guinea pigs." Mistrust was ubiquitous. The teachers did not trust, and therefore disparaged the administration, and just as they did with the Agent, the Administration did not trust and therefore disparaged the teachers.[14] Thus, the people who should have been collaborating, devoted energies to competing instead.

b. Control vs. Independence:

It was previously mentioned that the Vermont educational environment was and is in a transitional period. With the VSDE's adoption of the Vermont Design for Education (1971), a state-wide effort to improve education had been launched. All administrative Divisions were active in bringing about its implementation. All Field Agent tasks, as assigned by the VSDE, were related to the Design.

The preamble to the Design states:

> EDUCATION IN VERMONT, if it is to move forward, must have a goal toward which to move, a basic philosophy which combines the best which is known about learning, children, development, and human relations with the unique and general needs and desires of Vermont

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[14]The University level in Vermont did not escape discreditation either. A log entry (January 25, 1974), pertaining to the University of Vermont's involvement in the individualized approach to re-certification, states: "skepticism expressed by VSDE on UVM following through with its promise."

> communities. It is entirely possible to discuss goals and ideals in terms of more and better classrooms, expanded library facilities, health services, audio-visual equipment, and such. The Vermont Design for Education takes the position that, although these are certainly justifiable concerns, an educational philosophy should center around and focus upon the individual, his learning process, and his relationship and interaction with the teacher. Toward these ends, the following premises are offered which, taken in summation, constitute a goal, an ideal, a student-centered philosophy for the process of education in Vermont [p. 1].

Seventeen "premises" follow, which serve as guidelines for all activities directed toward improved learning and establishment of priorities. For example:

> EDUCATION SHOULD STRIVE TO MAINTAIN THE INDIVIDUALITY AND ORIGINALITY OF THE LEARNER [p. 6, # 5]
>
> SCHOOLS SHOULD BE COMPATIBLE WITH REALITY. LEARNING WHICH IS COMPARTMENTALIZED INTO ARTIFICIAL SUBJECT FIELDS BY TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS IS CONTRARY TO WHAT IS KNOWN ABOUT THE LEARNING PROCESS [p. 18, # 16]
>
> INDIVIDUALS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO DEVELOP A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY [p. 19 # 17]

The Design, in emphasizing that such philosophy should be kept in the fore, goes on to offer possible activities which might help a school move towards its implementation. The first activity stated refers to the teacher as, "The single most important factor in implementing these ideas . . . , and the quality of the interaction between the teacher and the learner [p. 20]." Also relevant is the Design's epilogue which emphasizes that acceptance of the philosophy and its implementation must be voluntary. "No amount of legislation or administrative mandate will provide beneficial and permanent educational changes for students [p. 25]." The

Design espouses, therefore, teacher-initiation, teacher importance, and teacher-independence,[15] and the Directors, in their own ways, truly attempted to actualize these premises.

Yet, it was patently conspicuous that the reaction to the philosophy of the Vermont Design was an obvious fear that this was just another attempt by the VSDE to undermine and to control the teachers within the school system. It was, in reality, received as an "administrative mandate." The PBTE workshops dramatized such polarities of perception, and these perceptions were engendered from past experiences.

The processes that account for these field reactions are relevant, since, as stated before, the locus of the Field Agent and its history of relations with clientele is vital to the effectiveness of the Field Agent.

Borrowing from a major theme of Shakespeare, that of 'appearance versus reality', the analysis of the reaction process in the Vermont field can best be described as consisting of two such levels; the first, 'appearance', superimposed upon the second, 'reality'. The upper level, 'appearance', was the visible process, or the one that could be seen and heard. This 'appearance' level represents the reciprocal behaviors made manifest between State Department

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[15]The Vermont Design is a highly laudable, visionary document. The reader is invited to read it in its entirety.

personnel and those in the field. The lower level, 'reality', is the subliminal level, or, the covert one that motivates the overt behavior. This 'reality' level represents the kaleidoscopic, psychological forces that rarely, if ever, surface unveiled.

c. Authority vs. Democracy:

Rogers (in McClelland, 1968) has identified four key elements in diffusion which is a useful paradigm for this analysis. The key elements are: (a) the innovation itself; (b) its communication; (c) the social system, and, (d) the time. Communication is defined by Rogers as "the transfer of ideas from source to receiver [p. 6]." The innovation (the Design) has been discussed; the method of communication in the "transfer of ideas" has not.

One intended use of the Vermont Design, unveiled by the Director of the Division of Continuing Teacher Education at a PBTE workshop, was to provide the opportunity for teacher-initiated, idiosyncratically designed teacher-recertification programs (see pp. 57-60, Chapter II). It should be noted that the "source" (in Rogers' terms) was the VSDE Director in charge of teacher certification, and the "receivers" were the teachers at the workshops.

Another innovation was mandated from the Director of Divisions of Planning Services ("source"), and communicated by him to the teachers ("receivers") in order to encourage teacher-initiated curricula changes. The changes were to

be based on results of a sampling within the community, with an instrument that was 'recommended' by the same Director.

In each case, the leadership, development, and communication "sources" were the Directors at the State level of administration. Like the Director-Field Agent relationship, the "transfer of ideas" were administrative decisions. The Design's, and the Directors' public espousal was teacher-independence ('appearance'); the perception of the "receivers" was administrative control and deception ('reality').

The Director's presentations of the local re-certification plan at the PBTE workshops were democratic. Consistent with the Design, the teachers were advised that they were free to choose or not to choose. The Director announced the demise of the old authoritarian-type leadership, and bestowed upon the teachers the "freedom to be themselves." It is proposed that the intentions of the Directors were sincere and benevolent. It is proposed that they honestly believed they were being democratic. But their 'emancipation proclamation' was perceived by the teachers as not only vacuous, it was also seen as downright threatening when coupled with their 'reality' that the VSDE, when all was said and done, was still to be the ultimate judge on recertification. Sarason (1971) offers reasons for these reactions as residing in

> the pressure of externally determined criteria of performance, the pressure of internally determined criteria of personal and professional worth, the demandingness of the role, and the developmental

> consequences of the interaction of these and other factors . . . the teacher's role has conflicting and affective and deeply personal factors [p. 173].

The small, group discussions that followed the PBTE workshop presentation reverberated with negative attitudes. The State Department was seen as trying to "put something over" on the teachers. Ironically, the VSDE personnel predicted these reactions on the basis of their past experiences in the field (see p.58, Chapter II), yet, they proceeded in the traditional way, and acted precipitately.

The other case in point was the teachers in the Planning Division's District who were endowed with the questionable 'freedom' to design their own curricula changes on the basis of their community's responses. The looming final authorization,in this case, was to be issued not only by the administration, but also by the local bureaucrats and the restive tax-paying community as well.

The issue here is not the State Department's visibility and leadership; the issue is the major polarities in perception that existed between the communicator "source" and the "receiver" system, or, the deception of 'appearances versus reality', and how it affected State Department relations with its field. The 'appearance' was the State Department's espousal of democracy and professionalism. Because of historic conditioning, however, the 'reality' for the field was a characterization of Administrative personnel as manipulative types who go through the motions of soliciting

opinions and arriving at consensus, but who are actually pressuring implementation of their own views. It was consensually believed in the field that the State Department was simply not predisposed to the delegation of authority or to the sharing of rights. The Field Agent experiences with VSDE personnel confirmed this belief.

Such conditions interfere with effective organization improvement. According to Beckhard (1969),

> A continued discrepancy between top management statement of values and styles and their actual managerial behavior. I know of one organization which has spent considerable money and effort over several years in organization-improvement effort. The effectiveness of the organization is only marginally increased. The top management still operates in a generally autocratic, and sometimes crisis-oriented style. The rest of the organization knows this, and has only limited trust in the statements of intention from the top. There is a credibility gap which causes people to be cautious, conservative, and self-protective [p. 93].

Similar psychological predispositions prevented the Vermont teachers from trusting the freedom in the process that was introduced to them. They viewed their roles as involuntary participants, a view which, of course, created for them dissidence, reticence, suspicion, and fear. The conceptions they formed of their Administration served, indeed, as bases for inaction and rigidity, or as convenient motives for projecting the blame. The State Department Directors' tendency to underestimate such factors adversely affected what they had hoped to accomplish, and simultaneously doomed the efforts of a Field Agent identified with them.

d. Dependency vs. Responsibility:

There was another dimension of 'appearance versus reality'. While those in the field 'appeared' to blame the State Department for their own inertia, they were, in 'reality', using "mistrust of the State Department" as a justification. An 'appearance' of mistrust was a socially acceptable decoy for the defense of their own publicly inadmissible confusion. The authorities in the VSDE had demonstrated their new intentions of treating the teachers as competent, intelligent persons. They attempted to nurture open participation by all persons and groups who were directly concerned in decision and educational processes. In order to bring about change and the role expectations congruent with change, this human relations philosophy, originating in the Design, was intended to operate on teachers, as individuals, to change their values, attitudes, and behaviors. It was an unprecedented attempt to change the 'psychological ownership' within the teaching force. But, as evidenced by the reactions, the announcement that teachers now had unlimited choice and total decision making in the control of their own destinies, became suspect, and did not, by any matter of means, catalyze a reversal-of-gears to an onslaught of liberated self-actualizers.

The Directors in the VSDE were unaware that the teachers were unprepared to handle this freedom. Freedom cannot be absolute; it infers responsibility which, in turn, is guided

by purpose. Whitehead (1929) said, "Freedom is the practicability of purpose [p. 103]." In order to put one's purposes to use, one has to know the goals towards which to be purposeful. When an individual has grown under centralized-decision making and control, and is then put into a position where he must start making major decisions, he is obviously ill-equipped by training and experience to do so. The individual has been trained to follow, to be directed and controlled, and, above all, to value the security that comes with dependency. This dependency-conditioning is prevalent in all educational systems because of a universality in preparation for all teachers.[16]

The reader is reminded of the dependence on Administration exhibited by the Bennington teachers whose major concerns were "What do I do now? [p. 79, Chapter II]."

As Bockman says,

> The traditional approach to management of human organization is to emphasize the role of the manager as determiner of what shall be done, where, how fast, how economically, and by what methods. Decision making centers on him, and his leadership is autocratic and authoritarian . . . the teachers are generally excluded from teacher-decision making [p. 10].

The Vermont teachers have been conditioned by this authoritarian system which has served, and still 'appears' to serve,

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[16] Implications for the survival of all Field Agent roles and such dependency-conditioning in teachers shall be discussed in the final chapter.

as the ultimate judge. They are imbued with the necessity of having their students reach a particular level of skill and knowledge in a fixed period of time, regardless of class size or heterogeneity, and regardless of whether the children are 'lost' to them or not. The teachers feel they are judged as well by the amount of material they cover in a fixed period of time. In dealing with the high school staff in Vermont, it became obvious,too, that the teachers perceived their roles as guardians of the children, keeping them busy, keeping them quiet, and finding ways to make them do their assignments. All this has very little to do with education per se. And then, the Directors in the VSDE suddenly decreed that the teachers, as the "most important" people in the educational setting, must be autonomous, responsible, and accountable in the solution to the problem of educating children.

e. Confusion vs. Clarity:

The triumvirate of autonomy, responsibility, and accountability was threatening to teachers, because the problem with "the problem of education" is that there is no agreement on what it is all about! The problem with effecting change in education is that no one really has a clear idea of (a) the original problem that needs changing; and certainly, (b) no one can articulate clearly what he wants to change it to. This vagueness was blatantly evident when the Field Agent was working with the high school teachers

(p.84, Chapter II). A music teacher exhibited 'tunnel vision' in classroom procedure, and a principal commented on his teachers' inability to formulate educational goals (p. 88, Chapter II).

J. Goodlad (in Sarason, 1971), after visiting 100 schools (i.e., 260 kindergarten and third grade classrooms clustered in and around the major cities of 13 states), concluded:

> Neither principal nor teacher were able to articulate clearly just what they thought to be the most important for their schools to accomplish. And, neither group was very clear on changes that should be affected in the future . . . studies have shown that administrators favor teachers who maintain orderly classrooms, keep accurate records, and maintain stable relations with parents and communities . . . [p. 118].

Alvin Toffler (1970) comments on such obfuscations when he says:

> Anyone who thinks the present curriculum makes sense is invited to explain to an intelligent fourteen-year-old why algebra or French or any other subject is essential for him. Adult answers are almost always evasive. The reason is simple: the present curriculum is a mindless holdover from the past [p. 410].

The Agent 'tested' Toffler's notions. She asked the same questions of the teachers at the high school. They were unable to respond. Whitehead said of curricula change way back in 1916:

> This question of the degeneration of algebra into gibberish, both in word and in fact, affords a pathetic instance of the uselessness of reforming educational schedules without a clear conception of the attributes which you wish to evoke in the living minds of children . . . You cannot put light into any schedule of general education unless you succeed in exhibiting its relation to some essential characteristic of all intelligent or emotional perception [p. 42].

Studies in human development point out repeatedly that children are different from one another, and that students and adults learn in a variety of ways (Bruner, 1963; Combs & Snygg, 1959; Ginsburg & Opper, 1969); yet, a most unfortunate schism has developed between the theory that students differ from one another, and the teaching that treats them all alike.

The State Department members confounded the situation by introducing innovations that were vague. "Changes can be introduced, but with certain provisions, and that is, if those who seek the change are clear about the conditions they want to create, and in order to be clear about the changes they want to make, they must be clear about existing ordinary and routine patterns . . . [Becker, 1973, p. 194]". Beckhard (1969) corroborates by describing a situation that inhibits change as

> ...a big program of activities without any solid base of change goals. Some organization managers install activities such as management laboratories . . . or a 'package' of goal-setting activities, and assume this to be an organizational development program. They don't have a personal commitment to the systemmatic setting of goals and plans for achieving them, and to providing responsible leadership in organization improvement [p. 93].

The premises in the Vermont Design, and the Phi Delta Kappa Goals (Educational Goals Program, 1972) (i.e., the instrument used to measure the dictates of community opinion [refer to Chapter II, p.77]) are pedagogical axioms. They are ideals toward which education should strive, of course. The gap, however, is infinite between such visions,and classroom

enactment through everyday procedures. The alternatives can be mind-boggling and confusing. The teacher can be burdened with fuzzy overchoice. "It is not terribly helpful to tell or encourage people to think systemmatically about the universe of alternatives relevant to a particular problem or practice. It is like telling people to be good: it strikes a responsive chord, but the sound does not last very long [Sarason, 1971, p. 223]." An individual's perception directly influences his behavior in the cognitive as well as the affective domains. As the overchoice looms, the person who lacks a clear understanding on his own roles and values becomes progressively confused and crippled. Nothing could be better calculated to produce situations of (a) avoidance rather than approach, (b) withdrawal rather than non-withdrawal, or (c) negative aggression rather than non-aggression.

f. Insecurity vs. Security:

Change makers must keep in mind that teachers' roles are complex: they have built in conflicts, demands, and relationships to other types of roles. For practical purposes, Sarason (1971) points out that it is nearly impossible for most people to generate and evaluate alternatives because it confronts them with the necessity of changing their thinking, then changing their actions, and finally, the overall structure of their setting. He goes on by expressing that it is one thing to theorize about change in the environs of a quiet office, but it is another to struggle

against change within the school setting. Such changes usually require changes first within the individual, and to change one's ways of thinking is very difficult because one tends to deny that his thinking may be different from the espoused point of view. Furthermore, if one deliberately tries to adopt another stance, then one finds himself in unchartered territory and on unfamiliar grounds. "Intended consequences are rarely stated clearly, if at all, and as a result, a means to a goal becomes the goal itself, or the misleading criterion for judging change [Sarason, 1971, p. 48]." Thus, the Field Agent's log reveals a "skill-bound" addiction of the teachers (p. 88, Chapter II).

Schools may attempt to broaden the variety of their course offerings, but they still remain wedded to the complex standardizing systems that are based on tracts, requirements, and the like. Toffler (1970) says:

> The present curriculum and its divisions into airtight compartments is not based on any well thought out conception of contemporary needs. Still less, is it based on any grasp of the future, any understanding of what skills Johnny will require to live in the hurricane's eye of change. It is based on inertia, and a bloody clash of academic guilds, each bent on aggrandizing its budget, pay scales and status . . . attempts by the present educational leadership to revive the physics curriculum, or improve the methods for teaching English or math are piecemeal at best. While it may be important to preserve aspects of the present curriculum, or to introduce changes gradually, we need more than haphazard attempts to modernize. We need a systematic approach to the whole problem [pp. 410-411].

The expression of freedom therefore, and the responsibility effusively granted by a naive State Department was, in 'reality', an inhibiting factor brought about through forced confrontation with one's inadequacies. The teachers were not at all sure of their course, and thus had little inclination to participate in decision making. The human tendency is to avoid the unknown. It is far easier to accept the status quo, or the unquestioned regularities in the school culture. If there are any challenges to the programmatic regularity, people are more likely to react with emotion rather than reason. In Vermont, when faced with this difficult situation, the teachers' first inclination was to react with anger, when the force, in 'reality', was an anxiety that arose out of the fear that their images as competent and special persons were threatened. They responded more to the threat of their roles, rather than to the problem itself. The emotion expressed, ('appearance') in this case, was skepticism or mistrust of the Administration; but, the 'reality' was a need for self-preservation. Their insecurities in job competencies, if revealed, could lead to no job at all.

g. Disapprobation vs. Approbation:

The need for self-preservation, or job security, also erupted in cynicism. The teachers protested that they could see no practical benefits for them in the innovation. Individualizing instruction, creating curricula, and designing

unique, performance-based recertification plans communicated to the teacher only burdens of overtime, overwork, and for many, no financial reward. With traditional recertification based on the credit system, a large majority of teachers had already reached the maximum salary level and were thus disinclined towards the efforts of innovating. A salient characteristic that affects the rate of adoption of innovation is, "relative advantage, that is, the degree to which innovation is perceived as better than that which it supercedes. Relative advantage can be expressed in such terms as economics, prestige, or convenience to the client [Rogers, in McClelland, 1968, p. 7]." The teachers in Vermont could not see any advantage. Teachers who are tired and who feel overworked, anonymous, and underpaid, do not list as their primary concern that of self-actualization. "Teachers feel, almost universally, that they are underpaid, even considering the shorter work year. They deplore the need to moonlight (over 1/3 do), and have the attitude that they are making a financial sacrifice by remaining in teaching [Peterfreund et al, 1970, p. 13]." Like Maslow's (1968) hierarchy of needs fulfillment, unless the teachers feel that their economic or security needs are satisfied, they will not seek satisfaction through growth factors such as achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, or advancement. Beckhard (1969), in his discussion of strategies for organizational development, attends to the dilemma of (a) fully

mobilizing the energy of an organization's human resources towards the achievement of that organization's objectives; while, at the same time, (b) so organizing the work, the work environment, the communication systems, and the relationships of the people, so that the individual's needs for self worth, growth and satisfaction are significantly met at work. He postulates that,

> Many values are changing as the human condition improves . . .
>
> 1. Man is and should* be more independent/autonomous.
> 2. Man has and should* have choices* in work and in his leisure.
> 3. Security needs should be met. Man should be striving to meet higher-order needs for realizing his own potential.
> 4. If man's individual needs are in conflict with organization requirements, he may and perhaps should choose* to meet his own needs rather than submerge them in organization requirements.
> 5. The organization should so organize work that tasks are meaningful and stimulating, and thus provide intrinsic rewards plus adequate extrinsic (money) rewards [p. 6].

Under such circumstances, the mere announcement by the VSDE personnel of a change in their Administrator's attitudes does not serve as prime motivation for a change in teacher behavior.

Yet, once more, the myth of 'appearance vs. reality' can be brought to bear:

> Educators are demanding recognition as true professional partners in the process of change, not as second class

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*The underlined represents Beckhard's italics.

> citizens. They have a growing demand for professional recognition, a willingness for serious intellectual partnership and an eagerness to share in the decision process [Baldridge et al, 1974, p. 702].

Control, autonomy, and trust is sought by teachers in Vermont; but not on overtime. An innovation and its planning must be included within the prescribed hours of the workday week. Because the VSDE Directors were myopic to, or helpless against, so many factors that tend to operate against any substantial voluntary change in schools, the reform they espoused was consistently channelled into insignificant areas, and the psycho-social relations between Administration and its field were to remain precarious.

In terms of relative advantages for teachers, Cooke & Zaltman, (1972) subjugate the financial incentive in the adoption of innovation, and instead emphasize other confounding variables that contribute to the 'appearance' of censure that stems from a 'reality' of threatened self-preservation. Their findings are more consistent with the social interaction change model which sees change as a result of the social relations network within the adopting unit. First, they postulate that "the perceived source of incentives, financial or otherwise, affect the nature of the Agent's [in this case the State Department] interaction with the client . . . the proposed innovation and the inducing organization [p. 8]." Later, they elaborate with:

> It cannot be assumed that change agents and user systems are motivated to interact primarily by

> financial or material incentives. There are a number of other factors, directly, or indirectly related to the change process, or the interaction itself, which induce individuals to participate in temporary systems. The nature of these other perceived inducements . . . , is greatly determined by the individual personality characteristics and organizational identification [p. 10].

House et al (1972) agree that

> of far greater importance [in attitudes towards change] are the variables controlling the would-be adopter's everyday world in his home district. The individual is caught in a powerful social web that determines his behavior more than do his individual impressions gleaned. The variables that influence whether he will adopt are those that shape his own environment [p. 12].

Sarason (1971) brings in the variables of significance:

> It will be, I think, axiomatic in a theory of change that the introduction of an important change does not and cannot have the same significance for the different groupings comprising that setting and that one consequence is that there will be groups that will feel obligated to obstruct, divert, or defeat the proposed change [p. 59].

There are teacher interactions that relate to self concepts. Teachers may talk about their lack of competencies in certain areas in their homes, or in private situations; but to confront them publicly involves for them distasteful complications or the risk of job-loss.

h. Summary:

In other words, as in any social interaction model, each of the participants, (the teachers, principals, administrators), seeks to strike an optimal balance between the possible gratifications and deprivations of his needs.

In any series of interactions, each develops perceptions of his and the other's ability to establish and to maintain a satisfactory rate of reinforcement. That is, each tries to assess the situation in terms of the needs he will have gratified, as over against those he will have deprived. Whenever the situation is perceived to be highly unfavorable to him, he experiences anxiety, or apprehension about it. To allay these anxieties and to test out his privately-held perceptions, the teacher is likely to seek out other participants with whom he would dare to share his anxieties and perceptions. These processes constitute some of the value schema that guide behavior in which participants of the school relate to one another (a) for sharing anxieties and private perceptions; (b) for supporting one another in uncertain situations, and, (c) for taking concerted action toward insuring their personal welfare.

Relevant psycho-social factors have been discussed by Erikson (1963) in his well-known developmental formulations. He describes the prominent themes which become apparent in the behavior of growing individuals at different stages. Using both conscious and unconscious emotional drives as basic motivational forces, he expresses positions that (a) there are psycho-social stages of ego development in which the individual has to establish an equilibrium with the social world; and, (b) each of these stages has a positive, as well as a negative component. His is a theory of 'developmental

adaptation' as it were. In his conceptualization of eight stages of man, he points out that each stage contains the possibility of a new dimension of social interaction; but the resolution of one stage becomes the directing component towards the resolution of the next stage. These formulations are highly applicable to the psycho-social relations between the VSDE and their educational system during the accommodative period to the implementation of the Vermont Design. Just as Erikson points out that the first dimension involves basic trust at the one extreme and mistrust at the other, so it was with the interactions of the State Department personnel with the Field Agent, and the State Department personnel with those in the field. Through these relationships, the degree to which a resolution of basic mistrust was fostered, attitudes of fear and suspicion were engendered in the teachers. These attitudes restricted for them the next possible dimensions of autonomy, and initiative. Moreover, just as the degree to which the same basic mistrust was fostered in the Field Agent, so was the autonomy and initiative of the Field Agent role restricted.

2. Political Dimensions:

In addition to the psychological components in change effectance, political factors play an important role. For example, the curriculum itself can arouse value reactions that relate to the political structure within the school. The overt curriculum may be a skill-bound subject like math

or English, but the subliminal curriculum may be guided by politics. In many cases, prescribed subjects do not sufficiently motivate the students, but the teachers want their students to achieve in them because they are responsible to the parents, community, and the School Board. In Vermont, the community played a decisive role.

a. Community Influence:

The State Department mandated community-involvement in the affairs at hand. The community was to participate in the identification of major problem areas to serve as basis for new curricula. The following are some excerpts, quoted verbatim, from the compilation of comments that accompanied the Phi Delta Kappa Goals (Educational Goals Program, 1972) needs assessment after the results were in.[17]

> I believe that your teaching staff should concentrate on the skills that they are trained to teach instead of trying to be psychologists or psychiatrists which, in my opinion, they are trying to do.
>
> Keep out of 'morals'. One man's morality is another's imorality [sic]. Schools have no business judging right vs. wrong. I hope you have learned something from the hair and dress fiasco.
>
> We think that if there was more learning of the respect of others, less long hair and less physical education[sic], and work with parents, and just go to school, learn hard, work, none of this high living [sic]. There would be better schools.

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[17]The entire listing is in Appendix E,(p. 258).

The evidence speaks for itself. According to the mandates of the VSDE, teacher-behaviors and instructional goals were to be directed by such community input. The teachers and administrators were to respond with affirmation to their community's wishes. It is of little surprise, then, that the Bennington, and the high school districts were not only "bogged down" with the statistics, but also were in need of help to "get out of the mud and onto the next level." The 'appearance' was progress in community involvement and influence through leadership. The 'reality' was inhibition and confusion because the teachers within were exposed to conflicting regulations and interference from without.[18]

Significant to this, Kreitlow (1972), reports on a project concerning models for effecting planned educational change. He revealed "influence scores" that were arranged for all systems in increasing order of influential groups. The group with the least amount of influence over the teachers in determining educational matters was the community, and the most influential was the Superintendent group. The influence groups were the Superintendents, Principals, and the Boards; not the community. Peterfreund and co-workers (1970) agree

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[18]It is interesting to note that one consistently reverts to the cliche that the school is the mirror of society. Under conditions of our time, if the school, in any serious sense, must mirror either the home, the community, or, the human race itself, then one is forced to pause and speculate in profound sadness.

that "parent leaders in both perception and the performance of their roles are influential in a lesser sense . . . of all the groups in the system, the parents' influence is the weakest . . . [pp. 18-19]."

b. Local Administrative Influence:

Sarason (1971) supports Kreitlow (1972) in the classification of Principal-and Superintendent-forces as the "power structure." His focus reflects a value judgement that:

> ...among all the aspects of the school culture that are, or may be, the objects of change, none is as important as the quality of life and thinking in the classroom, and that a prime requisite in proposals for change is any recognition that the principal is the crucial implement of change. That is to say, any proposal for change that intends to alter the quality of life in the school depends primarily on the principal [p. 148].

Bockman (1972) agrees as well: "[Research] would indicate that a change in a manager's or principal's attitude toward people is basic to restructuring and reform [p. 13]." Waller (1967) presents a hierarchy of control that differentiates the 'real' from the 'ideal.' The political order of the school is characterized by control on three levels. Roughly, these are:

(1) Theoretical. The control of the school by the school board, board of trustees, etc.

(2) Actual. The control of school affairs by school executives as exerted through the teaching force or directly.

(3) Ultimate. The control of school affairs by students, government resting upon consent, mostly silent, of the governed [p. 12].

In Vermont, therefore, principals and Superintendents should have been considered as primary targets for interaction with the VSDE administrators (or the Field Agent) in the process of change.

Yet, the literature proposes that school administrators perceive fewer inducements to initiate or to participate in change. This has been confirmed in Vermont. In addition to a natural desire to maintain the school's equilibrium, administrators often feel that (a) a school cannot afford the time to participate; (b) unfavorable findings will be disclosed; (c) the community will object; or, (d) improvements in the school will not equal the contributions made by the school personnel. The principal, in 'appearance', is 'shepherd' to his flock; in 'reality' he is, to a great extent, 'shepherded' by political influence.

c. Summary:

The schools in Vermont, then, are like any social system. On one level, the system involves the culture of the teachers as individuals, or as groups; either or both of which interact with each other, parents, and the principals. The process to introduce change aroused in the teachers overt reactions of anger, skepticism, cynicism, and mistrust, which, in turn, were manifestations of their basic defenses against a deep-seated fear and confusion. No matter how 'one sliced it', the teachers saw themselves as the ones who were to ultimately accept the blame for the outcome of

any changes; even if it were only during the process itself.

Intertangled with this is the political structure of the schools organized solely on an authority principle. The attempts to shift the authority compounded the insecurities of those in the field because they felt threatened by the community, the School Boards, each other and the VSDE administrators. Under such circumstances, managers and teachers typically opt for 'accepted' practices, because money, time, and continuous efforts are required for the survival of innovation. Vermont, like every other State, inhibits expenditure of funds for educational innovation because of the attitudes of its taxpayers, thus its legislatures and its Congress. Peterfreund and associates (1970), refer to this as endemic.

> A major problem in virtually every school district visited, say the administrators and board members, is that there just isn't enough money to pay for expanding systems and increasing salaries. They say the public is not willing (or able, say a few) to tax themselves to pay for these increases [p. 21].[19]

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[19] The students and their culture as well are significant in influencing a system. But in Vermont, the student appeared to be a minor, or ignored, variable. Valerie Bockman (1972) refers to Cuba who has addressed himself to the subject of change as it pertains to education. "He sees planned change, i.e., the results of conscious direction, as the only hope for education. To be effective, such change, he says, must restore relevance and impact and this requires increased participation from the ultimate subjects of education; the students themselves [p. 7]." In Vermont, however, because of training and tradition, teachers were threatened by fear of loss of control when confronted with the idea that students become participants in their own educational planning.

While conflict is a basis for political process, too much conflict restricts accommodation to it, and the system reverts to a conservatism that leaves little allowance for risk. That is why most of the teachers; after hearing the 'call' to 'freedom', and 'responsibility' at the PBTE workshops, are opting for their recertification methods, the traditionally approved, credit-offering, University-structured courses. And that is why the Vermont reformation will be the simplest form of change; that is, the substitution of one fragmented segment for another. Such homeostatic change is futile, since isolated, adjusted measures cannot possibly cure an unhealthy system.

It should be emphasized that the above complex analysis of the causes, processes, and the effects involved in the State Department's attempt to bring about change in the Vermont school system, was catalyzed by the need to depict the existing relations between the State Department and its system, since the Field Agent's identification, for those in the field, with the VSDE, was relevant to the success of failure of the Field Agent role.

B. Overview Analysis

1. VSDE:

A change strategy includes the establishment of an "organized procedure of informing those at the top accurately and rapidly both of the need for change at lower levels of the hierarchy, and of the actual consequences of attempted

innovation [Rogers, in McClelland, 1968, p. 14]." The Field Agent tried to undertake the advocacy of her anticipated clients' interests by providing feedback of observations in the field to those in the VSDE. Attempts were made to heighten their awareness of the necessity for an honest analysis and appraisal of the emotional reactions that were manifest in the field. Based on the logic that the introduction of any innovation could not be the final act requiring no further attention, the Agent maintained that there had to be a plan for feedback and support if the change was to be realized. Furthermore, the feedback, if acted upon, could have created a psychological linkage between field and administration, because the State Department would have shown "concern" and "interest"; components so vital in any large system that spawns anonymity. In the same manner, this feedback component applied to the implementation of the Field Agent innovation as well. The Agent firmly believed that the Directors, as policy makers, needed feedback information on both innovations so that they could have responded in a constructive manner. As revealed in the log, however, any feedback from the field that was provided to the Department became an exercise in futility, just as the numerous requests for Director-Agent confrontation on the Field Agent role itself.

Thus, there was no positive relationship or collaboration between the teachers, the State Department, and the

Field Agent on the major problems that were identified. The teachers complained about the State Department; the State Department continued to complain about the lack of creativity and individuality in the teachers; and the community complained about money and neglect of its children. This kind of variance can be generalized to most groups and institutions involved in the multi-bureaucratic structure of educational leadership. Psychological as well as physiological distance inhibits the gauging of one another's motivations and responses. Often, this is evident when a district administrator exhibits frequent impatience with, or contempt for a State or federal agency's inability to understand the local perspective, as well as in the growing militancy of teacher groups that reflect an impatience with the perspectives of School Boards and local administration.

The Vermont leaders simply lacked necessary ingredients that are generally supportive to innovation in any organization. Pincus (1974) summarizes these ingredients as "Organizational attitudes that support change (such as free communication, support from administration and colleagues, high staff morale); clarity of goal structures; . . . [pp. 120-21]." The Field Agent originally expected to bridge some of these gaps, but opportunities were stifled. It is again postulated that one of the restraining causes from effectiveness was by association. The debilitating relationships that were formed between the VSDE and its

field generalized to a Field Agent, located in the State Department, and who was denied autonomy.

It would be erroneous to conclude that the Vermont Design itself was ineffective. Rather, the methods used and the conditions for its implementation were causes of dissidence. Considerations of 'how' the innovation was communicated (source) and 'how' the system 'received' it are applicable to the analysis of the implementation of the Field Agent Project as well.

Like the teaching system that reflects its 'power structure', unless the administrative system itself is renegotiated, then neither the VSDE, nor a Field Agent associated with it will bring about genuine change. The administrators must first be willing to submerge their overriding need for self-aggrandizement in a collaborating paradigm.

Just as Goddu and Ducharme (1971) ascribed Rogerian psychology to Field Agent methodology, the VSDE too, needs growth through "confrontation and analysis . . . [p. 8, Chapter I]." Only when barriers are lessened will straight talk begin.

2. NEPTE:

The members of the VSDE were not the only "sources" of an innovation; they were also "receivers." The concept of Field Agent was created, coordinated, implemented and linked through the VSDE by NEPTE.

As "communicators," the NEPTE administrators took the converse approach to the traditional means of defining a new role. Rather than adopting the standard, rational approach of first defining roles and then seeking efficient means appropriate to their achievement, the NEPTE personnel based their strategy on the operations of the innovation first, in order to then assess the consequences for the clarification of goals for the future. As described in the Introduction (Chapter I), the role of Agent was, of necessity, ambiguous in nature and ill-defined. The NEPTE Director, consistent with his purely responsive, non-authoritarian philosophy, maintained a low-profile image in his coordination of the role.

The author has postulated that the teachers in Vermont were inhibited in their progress toward change because of the lack of clarity in the projected goals. The VSDE officials, as "receivers," were hindered as well. Havelock (1968) expounds on the fact that coordination works better in theory than in practice. He says that:

> It would be unfortunate if the directors of linking institutions took a completely laissez-fair attitude. Coordination is difficult to achieve, but it is a prize worth the struggle. When a manager evades his responsibility in this area, his organization will fall far short of its potential [p. 104].

With the exception of the monthly reports that were sent to NEPTE and to the VSDE, the NEPTE Director's style was one that conformed with the laissez-faire approach. It was his

stated intention, however, that he wanted to give the "concept psychological space in which to grow [Dr. Goddu]." The Director's rationale was that it is difficult to define such a role in the early stages of the program, thus it is logical, and even desirable to allow a good deal of flexibility in developmental strategy.[20] Nonetheless, the first objective in any pilot program should not only be to establish the program, but also to build acceptance of it among the people whom the program is to serve. The second objective, then, should be to develop the procedures which will help to insure that the program does what it is supposed to do. Obviously, the second objective cannot be accomplished without at least a solid beginning in the first. In this case, all NEPTE contact with the participants of the innovation was individual and privy. Coordination and collaboration between the Agent, the VSDE, Anisa, and NEPTE never took place beyond the initial interview. Perceptions of the establishment of the program remained at odds, and acceptance of the Field Agent innovation within the VSDE, thus the Vermont field, became a myth. NEPTE had created the Field Agent Project, but its visions, (stated as follows)

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[20] Any search for accountability of a Field Agent notion cannot, in this case, be based on initial, consensual objectives. It is hoped, however, that this analysis will contribute a definition of goals and priorities in the future.

and those of Anisa's were poles apart from the Agency they chose as intermediary.

(a) The NEPTE Field Agent Program was seen as a possible solution to Dr. Goddu's assumptions that the causes of problems within educational reform resided in their being "systematized into little boxes, and their not creating and supporting a catalytic kind of people."[21] The Field Agent, and those on the Anisa staff, are a "catalytic kind of people," but fear of loss of control and territorial ownership by those in the VSDE precluded any support of Dr. Goddu's notion. NEPTE, in its affirmation of the Anisa Model, hired an Agent whose background represented a complete immersion in the Anisa view that education, like any human being involved in its process, cannot be seen in fragmented divisions. The Anisa Model is one that defies any mechanistic or molecular view of man; thus, his education. Yet, withall, the VSDE precipitated any actions in the direction of change. Change in the Vermont school system will be homeostatic and "systematized into little boxes."

(b) The NEPTE Director also hypothesized that "State Departments that 'do' all the creating and then imposing on the field" cause problems. The Agency they chose for the

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[21] The quotes in parts (a) through (e) are taken from the Organizational History, #3, in Chapter I of this thesis.

Field Agent was one that created, interpreted, and imposed the Vermont Design on its educational system. Confirming the NEPTE assumption, the authoritarian image the VSDE had in the field caused an inhibition of creativity, maximum involvement, and of establishment of rapport.

(c) The implementation of the Field Agent Project was to operationalize NEPTE's philosophical emphasis on being "field-focused" and "people-oriented." The Field Agent's services were limited mainly to those provided within the State Department. Also, the VSDE Directors, early in the Program, projected the Field Agent as unacceptable to the field with their consistent prognostications that the Agent would be seen as an 'outsider'.

(d) NEPTE's Agent was to have made a "significant impact" on the State in response to field requests. There were never any requests from the field. The initial relationship with a high school marked the beginning of the NEPTE Field Agent role. Had those in the VSDE remained positive in their attitude toward the school, its administration, and the Field Agent's involvement, precipitant closure would not have been effected. The reader is reminded of the Director's boycott with a sudden pronouncement that the Department wouldn't touch the school with a ten foot pole.

(e) Paradoxically, NEPTE perceived a "major effort in terms of access" in locating the Field Agent in the VSDE as

a means of legitimizing the role through association with an authority organization. The location of the Field Agent in the VSDE contributed instead, to a negative identification of the Agent. Furthermore, this strategy, above all, in Vermont, succeeded in obfuscating any legitimacy to the NEPTE role. The administration, as seen by NEPTE, is the seat of power. The metaphor is well taken, but the seat first needs re-upholstering! Because of the many factors heretofore analyzed, there could be no commitment to the success of the NEPTE Field Agent program and, as the literature purports, there can be no change unless the top leadership supports the innovation itself. The State Department personnel did, in fact, "appear to" support a notion of Field Agent; but according to their own narrow misconceptions of the role. Because NEPTE's method was laissez-faire, it thus became a priority, and added task for the Agent, to deal with the resistance in the VSDE rather than in the field.

In this context, the reader is asked to consider a point of speculation that has, as far as is known, been overlooked in all the literature. Overlooked, possibly, because the point may be uniquely applicable to the Vermont situation; but the author believes that its essence is generalizable to other State Departments and mediating agencies in which the Field Agent Concept will be implemented. In Chapter I, it was stated that the function of Field Agent served as a

means for the achievement of goals that were unique to each participating party [p. 25]. That is, (a) Anisa's goals were directed towards the development, exposure and the possible diffusion of its Model into the field. (b) NEPTE's goals were to test out their Model of educational reform, and in so doing, to enlarge upon its efforts towards regional cooperation and linkage. (c) the Field Agent, through a wholehearted belief in the commitment of the agencies she was to represent, foresaw a role in the provision of positive change in education. These motivations, inherent in the philosophies of Anisa, NEPTE and the Agent, conform with research that associates an incentive factor with the success of innovation.

Vermont's participation, however, involved no personal commitment to either the success or the failure of the NEPTE innovation of Field Agent. While NEPTE, the inventor, had a stake in its invention; the VSDE as field-tester, did not. All energies toward the implementation of the Vermont Design were in full force when the Agent came to the Department, and the ensuing activities left little room for doubt that the presence of the Agent was a matter of indifference to those in the Department. Like the case of the teachers of whom the Directors were once a part, the incentive factor was missing. Testing the Field Agent Concept might have been permitted in the State Department simply because its members were more interested in the language of innovation

than in the complexities of translating that language into innovative practice. Consistent with the "communication" of the Vermont Design to the field, the magnificent verbiage may have been perceived by the VSDE as sufficient. "There are many who profess faith, yet, in practice breathe mistrust both of life and man [Erikson, 1963, p. 251]." The VSDE will, no doubt, want a Field Agent as long as the money comes from NEPTE, but its definition will preclude any independent actions or "hierarchical transcendance."

It follows that NEPTE, too, must reassess its view of the locus of change as residing with the Administration, as well as its conception of a laissez-faire method as conducive to the development of an innovation. While there is validity in the assumption that administrators are the only group with sufficient power to carry through major shifts in educational philosophy, or to initiate structural change through mandate, this assumption becomes moot when the (a) administration/field relationships are such that the mandate for educational change serves only as catalyst to confusion and insecurity in the system; and, (b) the teaching system is incapable of realizing the change because of training deficits and mistrust of their administration. The teachers in Vermont became reactive as opposed to proactive. The VSDE mandated change; but they did not create the conditions in which the change could take place.

The degree to which the VSDE hampered, or could have

facilitated the work of the Field Agent, or of many Field Agents, certainly indicates that they are a variable in the Project that should, by no means, be taken for granted. Those who mandate change must understand the culture, the goals, and the norms of the organization in which it hopes to effect change. They must have a clear idea of the items that need changing in order to connect the intended outcomes with the actual performances. This applies to a NEPTE implementation of a Field Agent Concept; a State Department implementation of a Vermont Design; and, to a Field Agent making contributions to either.[22]

3. Field Agent:

The Agent's visions remained clear, but unrealized as well. The Agent truly believed in the Concept and strove to actualize it. It might be said that because she possessed the necessary characteristics of a NEPTE Field Agent, all obstacles became for her a challenge to be met and overcome. Briefly:

(a)[23] The Agent had a tolerance for ambiguity. That is:

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[22]There is another philosophy on where the leverage for educational change is located: when the main purpose of a program is to bring about a change, the best way to achieve it is to involve the teachers right from the start. Teacher involvement, however, has many implications, both from change and for the success or failure of a Field Agent Concept. This shall be discussed in the next chapter.

[23]Parts (a) through (f) are adaptions of the NEPTE Field Agent characteristics described in detail on pp. Chapter I.

Instead of shrinking from ambiguity, the Agent revelled in the challenge of it and made repeated attempts at confrontation and collaboration to establish a beginning definition for the role. There could be no ambiguity in the "function-orientation" of NEPTE, i.e., an impromptu treatment in terms set by the intrinsic nature of the task.

(b) The Agent had a recognition and avoidance of hierarchical limitations. That is:
Because of her Anisa background, and the support of Anisa staff as a team, she always saw herself in a multi-faceted role of serving a useful function in all levels of education, without being a "tool of one, or an advocate of the other." Diligent completion of the work assigned by the various divisional Directors, plus the 'extras', were seen as important considerations in establishing a trust relationship with the Administration in order to then move in to the field.

(c) The Agent had an area of expertise. That is:
Because of Anisa training, she was confident in her knowledge of the processes involved for attainment of learning competence, as well as secure in knowing she could call on other Anisa staff at all times.

(d) The Agent had respect for the potential of educational studies and research combined with skepticism of such research. That is:
Her respect for the potential of educational studies and

research was obvious through her Anisa affiliation: her skepticism stemmed from the same reference. Both she and the Anisa staff strongly affirm the research that involves dynamic, reciprocal processes of field testing.

(e) The Agent demonstrated an ability and desire to work with people cooperatively. That is:
The Agent's personality-type is social, outgoing, and clearly shaped by a belief in the inherent goodness of mankind and his infinite amount of positive potential.

(f) The Agent was able to accept postponed gratifications. That is:
All the preceding, differentiated characteristics, seen as cumulative and integrated reveal, in their totality, a security in the knowledge that all obstacles could be broken down, and a beginning effected.[24]

Such characteristics may have contributed to feelings of threat within the VSDE. State Department people are, after all, teachers, who, while elevated to a higher level, are still encumbered by a vast and complex network of interactions and traditions; while a Field Agent, if functioning

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[24]The Field Agent succumbed, however, under intolerable conditions of travel and the burdens of the energy crisis. Her geographic assignments, plus weather factors, and the frustrating gasoline shortages were incompatible with her limitations.

according to the precepts put forth by NEPTE, remains relatively exempt.

4. Anisa:

Through the services of its staff in Vermont, the goals for those within the Anisa Project at the University of Massachusetts were to increase their interactions with the field through a mutual cooperation and collaboration. Like a boomerang that is propelled in order to return to its thrower, the Anisa staff foresaw not only the opportunity to be a major factor in altering the educational status quo in many districts, but they also sought self-improvement and Model development through feedback from the field, as well as an enhancement in relations between R&D people and the field.

It must be noted that the Directors of Anisa, based on their knowledge of change effectance, stress the 'responsive' role. As a member of the Anisa staff, the philosophy of the Vermont Field Agent cannot be separated from that espoused by those in Anisa. The Agent was first to be the Vermont Field Agent in Education, with the knowledge accrued from Anisa research to have been utilized in context.

Anisa staff responded efficiently to the needs of the Agent. Cooperation in task fulfillment was consistent. Like NEPTE's laissez-faire style, however, initiated contact and collaboration with the other participating agencies (NEPTE, VSDE) was neglected.

The Field Agent briefly presented the Anisa Model in Vermont a number of times. Nearly all initial representations of the complex Model were requested out-of-context, and were restricted to five minutes. These impositions contributed to the identification of the Field Agent as a 'salesperson' or University 'egg-head' and precluded any role that was to be response-oriented.

Had there been coordination between Anisa, NEPTE, the VSDE, and the Agent, then, perhaps the projected role of Field Agent may have, in time, realized its potential.

C. Summation

With definitions, descriptions, and analyses, the problems and issues of the new role of Vermont Field Agent have been explored. While it appears that the problems thus far have out-weighed any possible successes, it is nevertheless hoped that future projects of this type will benefit from such pioneer efforts in an attempt to test the efficacy of institutionalizing a Field Agent approach. Furthermore, it is possible that a psychological impact could have been

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[25]The uniqueness of the two participating agencies (NEPTE and Anisa) made the potential for educational change infinite. The Field Agent was not only part of a team with educational expertise for the classroom (Anisa), but she had access to the other Field Agents within the New England Region (NEPTE Field Agents) for information-sharing, support, and assistance.

made in Vermont insofar as the VSDE Directors may have been 'conditioned' to this particular style of Field Agent. The work performed may have, at the least, provided criteria against which new guidelines can be drawn. Because of the quick turnover of Field Agents in Vermont, and because of the short duration of the present Field Agent in Vermont, not enough time has been allowed to separate the effect of the possible changes brought about by this Field Agent from the effects of the friction that arose from an effort to implement the concept within the State Department. Perhaps some advice was heeded in spite of no immediate feedback.

The Field Agent believes that this is the first, and possibly the only major treatise of the role of a Field Agent, written by a Field Agent, within a specific time and a specific setting. The available literature, up to now, has focused on generalities, or the diffusion of information on the characteristics of many Field Agent roles. As the role of the Field Agent develops, perhaps more written material will become available to be used as guide for activities, communications, and psycho-social relationships of other Agents.

In summation, then, since this Field Agent was hired by NEPTE to test out a new model for educational change, based on a person located in the VSDE, it must be said that the hypothesis, or innovation, remained unimplemented, thus,

untested. The innovation itself may not be inappropriate, but the implementation arrangements were. Either the design of the Program must be modified; or the operation of the program must be modified, else the program will remain without significant consequence.

CHAPTER IV

EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION

Innovation directed toward improvement of quality, efficiency, or intellectual enjoyment is desirable in any discipline. These goals may be achieved through the development of a particular product, a simple service or a more complex or useful process. Introduction of innovation into an established scheme, or institutionalized setting, is more challenging than explaining or selling a new concept to the autonomous practitioner who is unfettered by bureaucratic barriers.

McClelland (1968) cites studies of adoption rates of new ideas among individual institutions. They attest to the reticence to change. It took about 50 years for complete diffusion of the idea of kindergartens, with a lapse of 15 years before 3% of the nation's schools adopted it (Rogers, in McClelland). It took about 15 years for individual farmers to adopt a new hybrid corn (Katz, in McClelland). In scientific research it takes about five to ten years for implementation of scientific or technological findings or events (Sherwin et al., Price et al., in McClelland); and, it takes about two years for physicians to adopt and prescribe a new drug (Katz, in McClelland).

Sir Francis Bacon (in McClelland, 1968) perceived wisely,

> It is true that what is settled by custom, though it be not good yet at least it is fit. And those things which

> have long gone together are as it were confederate with themselves; whereas new things though they help by their utility, yet they trouble by their inconformity. Besides they are like strangers, more admired and less favored [p. 1].

The human intellect is usually receptive to the presentation of a new idea but it often appears to be resistant to its implementation because the nature of being "new" requires 'change' on the part of the recipient.

The Field Agent attempted to serve as linker at several levels of the Vermont educational hierarchy. Since the organizational and functional scheme of the VSDE and its relationship to the field are generally representative of the educational panorama in the United States, it is the intention of the author to use this final chapter of the dissertation to generalize from the specific experiences of the Vermont Field Agent in Education to the concept 'Field Agent' and its viability in the present system of education. A review of the factors that play a role in change will be instructive in explaining the generalizations.

A. Educational Goals.

The goal of the educational Field Agent, as described above, is in concert with the goals voiced by a majority of educators. In the simplest terms, it seeks improvement in the quality of education in a constantly changing world. The major question is one of implementation, and operation.

Several definitions of Field Agent were presented earlier in an attempt to describe the role. But no matter

whether the Field Agent responds as a "consultant" to clients with isolated problems (e.g., Johnny is not reading at his proper level; classroom discipline); or is used in a more direct role as "trainer" (e.g., training teachers, para-professionals; initiating R&D models), invariably, what initially appears to be a relatively simple, isolated task becomes more complex as the problems at the first level become associated with the operations of a system. The interconnection of the problems demands that the solutions to the individual parts also be interrelated to assure optimal overall performance. Any improvement of some problem in isolation is likely to be superficial, and result in an ultimate loss of efficiency. Change, in the present state of education, simply cannot be one dimensional. Today's Field Agent role, in the implementation of change, looms large and complex, yet potentially useful and effective.

B. The Nature of Change

The need for change in today's educational system is a reflection of the rapid change society is encountering. It is change of a revolutionary nature in contrast to an evolutionary one, destroying with it cherished, ingrained axioms and values, and looking to replacement by others that have not been tried. In such a situation, emotional responses tend to hold sway over reason. Both the institutions that train teachers, and their graduates functioning as teachers, are currently out of step with the needs of present

day students. The culture of the past may have spawned ideas pertinent to that period, but many of these are no longer relevant to or viable in contemporary society.

Change is a process; not an end. It is a means to an end whose nature, in part, must be destructive of old forms in its construction of new forms. Change can be regulated, but its direction depends on (a) a clear notion of what needs changing; (b) the conditions that exist for effecting change, and, (c) the processes involved in the promotion of change. Sarason (1971) states,

> An initial requirement of a theory of change is that it be appropriate to, and mirror the complexities of, social settings. It must explicitly recognize that settings are differentiated in a variety of ways (e.g., role, power, status) that make for groupings each of which may see itself differently in relation to the purposes and traditions of the larger setting and, therefore, perceive intended change in different ways [p. 58].

1. The School and Change:

Havelock (1968) sees schools as "Institutions that are more or less permanent structures through which society assures the performance of certain functions [p. 94]." Like the society and culture it reflects, the school has a cumulative nature. Like the other institutions within that society, the school has a phylogenetic and ontogenic past that influences its negotiations with the present. Thus, the implications for innovation in the schools of the present cannot be discerned without a consideration of the society in which it developed.

Grambs (1965) paints an interesting picture of the school as an institution. In a brief history of the attitudes towards education in the United States, she points out that few have changed. Since the colonists came to America to escape the aristocratic society, Ms. Grambs concludes that they, in effect, escaped the education associated with the upper class. Then, the men who gained power in America used combinations of ability, business acumen, chicanery and dishonesty, but little academic intellectualism. Presidents were depicted as desirable because they were rural and folksy, not intellectual. At the turn of the twentieth century, organized labor emphasized education for children; but only moderately, in order to minimize any 'backlash' of scorn from or toward uneducated parents. 'Frills', such as art, music and science[26] were unnecessary. A 'sissy' halo surrounded the school. Most teachers were female and the feminine traits of niceness and quietness were emphasized. Generally, Americans still expect education to guarantee good jobs, successful husbands, or finer tastes: all product-oriented, 'useful' goals; few of an intrinsic, personally fulfilling nature.

Brameld (1971) diagnoses the presence of conflict in our culture as "cultural schizophrenia." Although he qualifies

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[26]This changed with Sputnik.

his psychiatric analog, he notes several symptoms that prove especially disjointed and at odds. They are summarized as follows: (a) self-interest versus social interest--or, the conflict of responsibility to and for one's self as opposed to responsibility for others; (b) inequality versus equality--or, the failure to provide full civil rights as opposed to equal rights; (c) planlessness versus planning--or, a suspicion of centralized control of federal direction (socialism, Communism), corporate enterprises; (d) nationalism versus internationalism--or, isolationism as opposed to "one world"; (e) absolutism versus experimentalism--or, self-interest, inequality, planlessness and nationalism as opposed to social interest, equality, planning and internationalism;[27] (f) man-against-himself versus man-for-himself--or, fanaticism and violence as opposed to desire for peace.

The discrepancies in man's quest for the 'American Dream', and his reality, in Myrdal's classic An American Dilemma (1944) further lay bare the ambiguities that flourish

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[27]"Permeating all these cultural cleavages and extending beyond them, is a more subtle struggle between absolutism and experimentalism, regarded here in a broadly cultural... sense. On the whole and granting exceptions, we may say that self-interest, inequality, planlessness, and nationalism tend in our culture to be absolutist in spirit and action; whereas social interest, equality, planning and internationalism tend in our culture to be experimentalist in spirit and action [p. 29]."

in the values of American society. The schools, in assuring the transmission of culture, are rooted in these contradictions. They perpetuate the conflict at the student level by encouraging initiative and independence on the one hand, as they reward, on the other, conformity and standardization; or, they espouse cooperation while at the same time they create competition.

A paradoxical situation arises from society's urgent plea to meet today's changes by innovating in education and yet, its retreat from innovation to the comfort of former eras. Today's audiences have taken refuge in dramas of the gaslight era and songs of former decades. Their homes and recreational areas have favored the representation of a Victorian decor. This apparent cultural dichotomy results from the need to escape to a period of less risk, where reminders of established history produce less threat than untested newness. But temporary escape does not eradicate the intuitive feeling of the need for change when the stark reality of the changing environment comes into focus. Contemporary society is faced with what is currently believed to be declining morals, an expanding drug culture, economic crises, loss of respect for teachers and parents, general instability and uncertainty. It is human nature to find a place to lay the blame on difficulties elsewhere and it should not be surprising that the school system was selected as the most likely target. And like a chain reaction of

collisions among closely spaced cars that are suddenly forced to stop, teachers blame parents, unions blame administrators, and the latter implicate the politicians. A feeling of powerlessness pervades the issue, and each group awaits a solution from the others.

It should be obvious that the entrance of a Field Agent into such an atmosphere can lead to confrontation. The Field Agent cannot only be challenging to the very roots of educational conservatism, but an Agent who brings to a level of conscious awareness the dichotomies that pervade the system, can be opening 'Pandora's box'.

It should also be obvious that change, in complicated settings like the school requires initially, at least, a way of thinking about change that is distinct from the approach used for changing individuals. Sarason (1971) summarizes,

> One of the most difficult obstacles to recognizing that the major problems of our schools inhere far less in the characteristic individuals than they do in its cultural and system characteristics is that one cannot see culture, or system, the way one sees individuals. Culture and system are not concrete, tangible, visible things in the way individuals are. In many respects it is easier to think about an individual teacher, or an individual principal, than it is to think, for example, about the roles of teacher and principal and their relationships independent of individual personalities. It is only in recent years that we have become aware of how little we know about schools as functioning organizations or systems [p. 228].

2. Conditions for Change:

The need for changes in education are apparent; a clear understanding of what is being changed and how to

inaugurate change is not so apparent and requires dealing with complexity. Sarason (1971) has enunciated,

> It may well be that one of the reasons we lack adequate description of the change process in the school setting has been the recognition of the complexity of the problem. . . . But the recognition of the problem is probably quite secondary in the fact that the problem has not been seen as a problem; therefore, there has been no good or compelling reason for focusing on the description of the change process [p. 32].

Goals are articulated all the time, but the lack of distinction between objectives and the means to the end stall change. In regard to goals, it has been noted (Chapter III) that there is no consensus in what "being educated" means. As a result, today's educational goals are "schizoid." Impeding change is the vagueness and the multiplicity of goals and the consequent lack of good instructional objectives. Propositions such as those stated in the premise of the Vermont Design and the Phi Delta Kappa Goals (1972) can be multiplied interminably. "Schools must become more open;" "we must teach the whole child." When proffered, most people agree. But because these propositions are general statements that do not specify what observable consequences in performances must be obtained, the agreement leads nowhere. Therefore, much of the direction of change seems to be a refinement of existing machinery that results in a more efficient pursuit of obsolete goals (Toffler, 1971). Indeed, the NEPTE pathway using the Field Agent approach is reactionary in being anti-precedence to existing educational reform.

There are, however, describable conditions for change. These conditions are seen as intimately intertwined with the availability of clear innovative ideas. Even with formal goals "setting the climate and tone" for change, Peterfreund and his co-workers (1970) maintain that it is the presence of a central philosophy (uniformity throughout an educational system) that can increase the impact of change. They reveal other observed factors that favor successful innovation in school systems: (a) existence of formal goals; (b) a strong superintendent; (c) effective leadership at the school level; (d) a teaching staff in tune with individual student need in relationship to school and community environments; (e) a management system capable of communicating and supporting the environments; (f) financial resourcefulness; and, (g) dissatisfaction with the status quo. Factors of less consequence are: (a) school location; (b) size of school system and student body; (c) budget size and operating costs; (d) economic characteristics of the community; (e) range of abilities; (f) academic and educational goals; and, (g) racial balance and economic background of the student body itself.

In contrast to Peterfreund's findings, Sarason (1971) claims that the size of the school is an important variable. Evidence in support of this belief comes from a study (Barker & Gump, in Sarason) in which students from an underpopulated small school were alleged to feel greater

pressures to participate in activities as compared with students from a large school. Another important finding was that the students from the small school felt more responsible, a behavior desired by the community, but one that may be a reflection of persistent pressures on the students.

Kelly (in Sarason, 1971) affirms that the rate of population turnover dictates change behavior. Kelly illustrates that if a high school has a constant environment, the participant students will be effective members in a constant society, but they are more likely to assume maladaptive behavior in a "fluid environment."

Becker (1973) puts forth a variety of factors that determine whether the school provides a climate favorable for change:

> generally speaking, flexibility and responsiveness to change on the part of schools or departments hinges on their (1) capacity for self-renewal; (2) skill at problem solving; (3) ability to exert influence on administrators or other decision makers; (4) climate for learning; (5) degree of creativity; (6) adequacy of communications; and (7) extent of trust and sharing [p. 194].

At the administrator level, Pincus (1974) elaborates on three factors favorable to innovation: (1) bureaucratic safety--acceptability of the innovation by colleagues in similar positions at other institutions; (2) response to external pressure--community demands can lower the threshold of bureaucratic unresponsiveness; and, (3) approval of peer elites--in the absence of clearly defined output criteria,

consensus among the elite is often the primary decision-making force.

3. The Process of Change:

While there is sufficient evidence for the need and desire for change, and there is some documentation of conditions for change, there are few, adequate, descriptive data on the ways in which change is executed in a school system. The apparent paucity of understanding of the process of change is a deterrent to the smooth implementation of change. The innovative Field Agent concept itself is a glaring example of this. Irrespective of the field of change, there are sociological, anthropological, industrial, educational, and psychological factors that play a role in the process of diffusion of innovation. McClelland (1968), in a deep, probing review on the process of change, cites the description of an adoptive process by E. M. Rogers in which the characteristics of the innovation that affect the rate of adoption include: (a) relative advantage (economics, prestige, convenience); (b) compatability with existing values and past experiences; (c) divisibility (a stage-by-stage adoption, or an all-or-none adoption); and, (d) complexity (in use and understanding).

Among the diverse factors influencing change, McClelland (1968) also discusses three types of change processes: (a) imitation, (b) selective contact change, and, (c) directed contact change. He attracts attention to the latter type

in which there is "a deliberate and collaborative process [p. 4]" where a change agent and a clientele being served work out a program of change together. He also describes the process of change, as practiced, as an art form, weak in scientific fact but rich in intuition and folklore. The reader is reminded, in summary form, of three propositions related to change which McClelland (1968) claims are untenable. The first one declares "a good product will succeed on its own merits." The second is that implementation requires no additional monitoring, and the third states that innovation passes logically "from research, to development, to use." However, as discussed in Chapter III, McClelland relegates the analysis of innovation and its diffusion to the discipline of social science "for innovation of any kind is a social-behavioral phenomenon [p. 4]."

The reader will also recall that Rogers (1965), whose paradigm was discussed in Chapter III, espoused four elements which must be examined in the process of change: (a) the innovation itself, (b) communication, (c) the social system, and (d) time.

According to Becker (1973), there are first steps that are indispensable in initiating change. They are:

> (1) providing clear pictures of the desired state of affairs; (2) defining clearly the objectives of proposed innovations; and (3) analyzing the . . . clients so that workable and appropriate strategies can be devised [p. 194].

In the process of directed contact change, McClelland (1968) suggests that it may be helpful to consider the personalities of innovators. He refers to the adage that "travel broadens the mind," implying that dissemination of knowledge is facilitated when the innovator gets around, particularly outside his normal environment.

The innovators themselves are central to the process of change. Whether the innovators are farmers, school or business administrators, teachers, Field Agents, or the clients of Field Agents, Rogers (1965) has discovered six general characteristics of innovators. They are: (1) generally young; (2) relatively high in social status in terms of amount of education; prestige ratings, and income; (3) impersonal and reliable sources of information are important to them; (4) cosmopolitan; (5) opinion leaders; and, (6) likely to be viewed as deviants by their peers and by themselves.

As has been emphasized, change paradigms must take into consideration the conception of the school as an organization. House and associates (1972) claim that many R&D paradigms are, unfortunately, essentially engineering models depicting the receiving organization as being composed of standard building blocks which can be removed and replaced with superior ones. From the engineering viewpoint, there is an insufficient quantity of improved parts available so it becomes the duty of demonstration centers, regional laboratories,

and Field Agents to fabricate more items saleable to the consumer. This view rests on the premise that the adopting organization (that is, the system of schools) is an integrated, problem-solving mechanism in pursuit of common goals. A further erroneous assumption is often made that values and goals are mutually acceptable and all that is needed are new means. "Consequently, the whole change process is viewed as problem-solving in a consensus society [p. 13]." Nothing is further from the truth.

C. The Resistance to Change

Change necessitates conflict, since it is a direct challenge to tradition, and repetitive, rehearsed, dogma. There are areas of agreement that permit some change; but it appears that innovations which are selected are the ones where the amount of old behavior which must be given up is minimal. Sarason (1971) states,

> One is forced to the realization that man's desire to change is more than matched by his ingenuity in avoiding change, even when the desire for change is powered by strong pain, anxiety, and grief [p. 121].

He observes that the human elements that comprise the school culture exhibit little enthusiasm when their domain is target for change. Similarly, Becker (1973) notes,

> Like individuals, most organizations also tend to resist change, and the schools are no exception. They have their decision makers and their established rules, norms, ideologies, rewards and structures. The way jobs are defined and assigned, the way rules and procedures are formulated and enforced, and the way budget is allocated can all be obstacles to change.

> Similarly, existing technology and entrenched educational practices are subject to a kind of inertia that often defies attempts at innovation [p. 193].

It is pointed out by Pincus (1974) as well, that the bureaucratic safety constraint means that schools are unlikely to accept radical changes.

Society needs an educational system that is responsive to innovation because cultural and environmental changes are inevitable. The need for change is obvious; the nature and process for change are, at the moment, incompletely comprehended. Professional educators who are innovators, or who stimulate others to be innovators, must develop paradigms that can penetrate the presently impervious barriers to improvement in the quality of education. "The urgency for this need for improved practice and better theory is great [McClelland, 1968, p. 19]." Sarason (1971) concurs:

> A theory of the change process is helpful to the extent that it says not only what would happen but also what could happen under certain conditions. Theories are practical, particularly in relation to the change process because they tell one what one has to think and do, and not what one would like to think and do. A theory of the change process is a form of control against the tendency for personal style, motivation, and denial of reality to define the problem and its possible solutions along lines requiring the least amount of personal conflict [p. 53].

Just as further clarification of the nature of change is mandatory, so must the factors of resistance to change be scrutinized, since the change process involves overcoming the tenacious resistance to change that is manifested today by both individuals and organizations. The people involved

overreact to newness because innovation deranges the comfort of homeostasis. As discussed in Chapter III, a temporary disequilibrium evokes fear of failure. The unknown is too risky. And, as alluded to previously, while contemporary society's plea for innovation has almost come to a level of hysteria, as newness is displayed in unrecognizable shiny wrappings, society shrinks from its brightness.

Several inhibitory factors encountered in the resistance to change have been analyzed in Chapter III. These may be reviewed briefly as follows: (a) diffuseness of goals; (b) lack of teacher skills and scholarship to introduce innovation; (c) absence of assessment and feedback; (d) educator reticence and suspicion fostered by pressures from parents, school boards, and power elites; (d) management and funding problems, and, (3) want of relative advantage. These elements have definite effects on the way any Field Agent can function. We now turn our attention to a discussion of some of these factors, followed by their consequences for the implementation of a Field Agent concept and its effectiveness in bringing about change.

1. Teacher Resistance:

Despite the fact that the process of change, if it is to be systemic, must be initiated in a manner that will permeate all levels of the educational system, it is sensible to examine both the positive and negative aspects of each stratum of potential resistance. Of primary importance is

the examination of teacher attitude. The survey by Peterfreund and associates (1970) led to the conclusion that "the lack of teacher involvement is the single most frequent cause of failure to successfully implement innovation [p. 11]." These evaluators quickly point out that, in great part, teacher resistance is due to both inadequacy of the role of administrators in preparing teachers for change and the failure of teacher training programs to make them adaptable to change. "Change is thrust upon them without training, communication, involvement, or evaluation [p. 11]." The common question teachers enunciate is directed at how to obtain aid in implementing change. In fairness to the teachers, it should be recognized that the present day explosion of knowledge is overwhelming. Since it is unreasonable to expect them to know everything, it is essential to alter their focus from the content of education to a process of learning. This change of focus will remove the unnecessary, assumed burden of "teacher omniscience" as well.

While teachers demand recognition as professionals, few exert an independence from the system that emphasizes a fixed curriculum and unwieldy pedagogical behaviors. Their training inhibits the full realization of this demand. The teacher in a system who can articulate curricula and

pedagogical goals, prescribed by a philosophy of education, is rare. The focus of teachers is on solutions to immediate, local problems, and represents the continuation of the fragmented thinking conditioned by their training. They do not exhibit the ability to generalize.

A time element also influences teacher attitude since their pedagogical clock is regulated by the semester intervals. Education researchers, on the other hand, are concerned with long-term accomplishments, and not immediate or partial solutions to pressing problems. The problem of how to achieve real classroom health is not subject to "cookbook solutions." Paradoxically, while researchers are disparaged for trying to control discrete variables in the face of the full complexity and integration of a classroom teacher's ongoing situation, it is the teachers' perceptions that are fragmented.

It must be noted that the evaluation of certain school districts by Peterfreund and co-workers (1970) confirmed the presence of teacher motivation and dedication.

> Teachers talk as often as administrators do about the need for change; the question they want answered is how they implement change. How do they get the help and training they need to change [p. 12].

Sarason (1971) generously expresses,

> It is not that these people [teachers] are anti-theoretical or untheoretical, because many of them are quite sophisticated as to the theoretical basis for what should or ought to be. What the theories fail to do is to face the problem of how one gets to one's

> goals. . . this is far from being a 'practical' problem (in the sense of how one 'engineers' change) but rather we are dealing with a theoretical problem involving not means and ends but a continuous process [p. 21].

Toffler (1971) refers to "culture shock" as a condition which occurs when a person cannot cope with rapid sociological changes brought on by the superimposition of a new culture on an old one. Today's teachers are not educated for change. Many teachers do not, or cannot see any relevance in the courses they took in college to their daily work in the classrooms. Their understanding is clear only as short-term goals. "Teacher education did not adequately prepare them for the realities of the classroom . . . [Peterfreund et al., 1970, p. 11]." In the face of society's pronouncement that our manner of preparing teachers is, at best, inadequate to meet current needs, college teacher training programs have remained antiquated. They do not develop the needed skills and knowledge to engineer innovation. Reports show that college does very little to change perceptions of the students. Rather, it entrenches even more those perceptions with which the student enters college (Kvaraceus, 1968). The need for change is verbalized, but the natural inclination is to retreat to what one knows in the past (Toffler, 1971). Entrenched traditions are strong human conditioners, and difficult to replace.

The cure for future shock is to restore to the people their sense of control over their lives and the shaping of

their future (Jordan & Streets, 1973; Toffler, 1971). It is the loss of this sense of control which causes a person to feel anonymous, helpless, disoriented, and alienated. And the teachers, as well as the administration, are members of the very society which has failed to cope with change.

The predominant objective of learning, then, is clearly before us: the greatest gift a teacher can give a child is the power to choose; to control his destiny through an ability to be a competent learner.

2. Managerial Problems:

Although it appears that teacher training is the pivotal position of resistance to change, suitable leadership at a higher managerial level (i.e., principals, administration) is mandatory (Bockman, 1972; Carlson, 1965; Havelock, 1968; McClelland, 1968; Sarason, 1971). The success of any organizational development effort is, in large part, related to the quality of management. As discussed in Chapter III, a commitment of top management to invest energy in change is obligatory if change is to take place. Peterfreund and colleagues (1970) state,

> Managerial problems more often than not outweigh the educational problems in preventing the process of change. For the degree to which key elements . . . the superintendent, the administrative staff, the principals, the teachers, the School Board and the parent leaders--work together in a systematic way

> toward common objectives is one of the most important identifying characteristics in assessing a school district's chances for successful innovation [p. 18].

These authors go on to say;

> By the educators' own testimony and by our observations, a major problem in most school districts is the lack of managerial skills. The administrative structure of the school district and the thinness of its managerial ranks inhibit the process of change [p. 16].

To this point may be added the fact that there is a paucity of training programs for school administrators. With a critical role in the diffusion process, managers of education must be trained for leadership. As pointed out (Chapter III), administrators are, for the most part, former teachers whose training focused on interactions with children in a classroom. The function of administrators involves, to a large degree, interactions with adults.

> It should be obvious that change will be affected by
>
> the degree of perception by the members of the system of the need for reform, or the magnitude of discrepancy between what the members regard as acceptable leadership behavior, and how the leaders actually perform, and the degree of willingness on the part of all members to modify attitudes and behavior which such discrepancies are demonstrated [Bockman, 1972, p. 12].

3. The Factor of Time:

In education, and no less in other disciplines, the rate of diffusion is inextricably bound to a strategy of change. In any large organization, there is a time factor, and the school district is usually one of the largest, if not the largest employer in the community (Peterfreund et al., 1970). It is possible to predict a correlation between time interval of implementation, and resistance to change;

the more intense the inhibitory factors, the longer the time period needed to exercise change. Replacement of a textbook cannot be equated to altering human values. Teachers want short-term, visible production; a need created, in part, from pressures of peers, parents, employers, and taxpayers. The point was made (Chapter III) that educational behaviors are compartmentalized into June-to-June disjunctions or book-to-book progressions. A short-sighted society is unwilling to take a chance on delayed gratification.[28]

It is not enough for innovators to innovate. They must convey the sensibleness in considering a realistic, and not impatient factor in the formula of change. It takes time for a client to become aware of an innovation, to be aroused to consider it, to evaluate it, to conduct an actual trial, and, finally to adopt or reject it. Despite the pessimism generated by slowness of change, the national attitude toward rapidity of change has steadily improved since the turn of the century (McClelland, 1968). Obviously, the response time to innovation has not reached the acceleration equal to the speeds of alterations now taking place in contemporary society. Sarason (1971) properly comments,

> Any attempt to introduce change is accompanied, implicitly or explicitly, by a time perspective

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[28] Ironically, a long term perception was manifest essentially in the Department of Commerce when it funded the formation of NEPTE, because it associated future labor potential with present day educational quality.

> that, so to speak, tells one when something should be done and when certain outcomes are to be expected. . . . Why is there frequently underestimation of how long it takes to initiate the change process--an underestimation that can arouse such feelings of anger or discouragement that it may result in aborting the process or in enveloping it in an atmosphere inimical to the intended outcome [p. 60].

It is not surprising that the time perspective will vary in accord with the level of strategy. Beckhard (1969) comments:

> ...usually at least two or three years are required for any large organization change to take effect and be maintained. This is one of the major problems in organization development efforts, because most reward systems are based on rewarding the achievement of short-term 'profit objectives'. Most organization leaders are impatient with improvement efforts which take extended time. Yet, if real change is to occur and be maintained, there must be a commitment to an extended time, and a willingness to reward for the process of movement toward goals. . . [p. 15].

One need only to look at the examples cited in the Introduction to this chapter to realize the relevancy of the time factor in bringing about change.

4. Government Support:

Whereas early federal commitments may have been in line with a reasonable tax structure, burgeoning populations and rampant inflation have undermined adequate financial support for education both at the federal and State levels. In addition, although State governments attempted to assure a teacher educational resources by expanding State college facilities, the caliber of college faculty left much to be desired. Inadequate State leadership, dwindling budgets, and unrestricted student enrollment in teacher programs have

inadvertently become, in part, resistances to change. With the advent of the Civil Rights Movement, federal enactments simultaneously provided aid and confusion to educational programs. Innovation, catalyzed by federal pressures, mushroomed, and spawned a few programs of worth, and many of little or no worth while State and local educational administrators welcomed the flow of dollars. Today, however, the question of the cyclic nature of federal funding and of the unpredictable motivation of political expediency render change opportunities somewhat tenuous. As observed by Peterfreund's group (1970),

> The impact of federal funds can be significant. . . a number of administrators and board presidents feel that the Federal Government's role in education must increase significantly if schools are to change. . . [p. 23].

Havelock (1968) more adamantly expounds,

> Knowledge linkage is a serious and massive problem. Effective retrieval alone, disregarding dissemination, is becoming a problem with which individual universities and companies can no longer cope. Add to this dissemination needs, including packaging, conveyor and consultant services, and effective opinion leadership, and we are then talking about a multi-billion dollar enterprise involving the coordinated efforts of tens of thousands of skilled professionals [p. 98].

He further points out that without intense government commitment, alone, or in conjunction with non-profit and commerical organizations, a coordinated system of linkage so vital to change is unlikely. On the other hand, Havelock cautions that an unsuitable interplay among the various organizations can distort and deflect the function of diffusion and

utilization of knowledge.

The power to legislate change, however, even with a large financial endowment, is no guarantee of change; overt resistance may be bridled by legal phraseology, but deeper emotional or prejudicial behavior often remains immune to rigid law. It is true that laws alone may poke holes in a barrier, but creating the conditions for operating under the law have a greater chance of swinging the barrier open. In fact, as clearly exhibited in Vermont, inhibition to change is amplified when administrative mandate is vague or too broad. Under such circumstances, state agencies easily find fault or express disappointment in lack of achievement by their local districts, and conversely, the latter fight back with disparaging criticism of the mandators. The antagonism may be justified. Ill-defined mandates of innovation from any seat of power, indeed conceal potential problems. A good example of a Federal mandate causing confusion is the Federal definition of disadvantaged child (p.74, Chapter II). An untenable situation arose because the government defined a disadvantaged child as one being one or two years behind in grade level. In taking this posture, the government precluded any measurement of learning against oneself. In effect, this position was in total opposition to the government's mandates for individualized approaches to learning!

Two other points related to government intervention in educational innovation are worth mentioning. One concerns

the tendency to impose new tasks that are required to fit into existing structures. This violates the "form follows function" principle which should be given more serious consideration. The second point concerns the lack of an interrelationship among the various educational centers established by the government. Havelock (1968) expresses this concern as follows:

> First came the R&D centers established with firm university bases, and perhaps suffering ineffectiveness as linkers for that reason. Then came the ERIC Centers, University based and coordinated at the federal level, but so far equipped primarily to service the information needs only of researchers. Finally, we now have the Title III Centers at the school system level, and the regional laboratories, originally created as semi-autonomous research, training and service centers to serve groups of states on a regional basis. In spite of this flowering of institutional structures and substructures, and in spite of planning and funding from one source, there is no explicit relationship among the various units [p. 98].

In discussing diffusion in education, Havelock (1968) concludes that the development and establishment of linking roles would not be possible in the absence of extensive federal commitment. But, massive federal financing in education, at present, is now the nutriment for more 'pressing' problems of desegregation and runaway college tuition costs; not for directed innovation.

D. The Field Agent and Change

The concept of Field Agent implies that it is possible for the Agent of change (1) to know the nature of change (Part B); (2) to deal with resistance to change (Part C);

and (3) to create the conditions for the implementation of change. In other words, in spite of (a) the slow rate in adoption of innovation; (b) the confusion in values manifested in today's society; (c) the paucity of understanding of the conditions needed for change as well as the processes involved in change; (d) the resistance to change due to fear and lack of preparation for teachers and management; and, (e) the need for massive and integrative government support, the implication is that the Agent can bring about change.

The Agent can understand the targets of change, as well as maintain an awareness of the interactions among the targets (i.e., administrators, teachers, parents, students) in order to judge where to begin the change in the school, which is an ecological system in which there is a whole culture with its sublevels and individuals (Sarason, 1971).

Furthermore, the Agent's strategy for introducing changes and bringing them about can involve adapting to, and working through, the local cultural patterns, particularly the pattern of local leadership (Niehoff, in Sarason, 1971).

The concept of Field Agent also implies that a practicing Field Agent can focus attention on: (1) what is the specific change problem? (2) what systems and sub-systems are specifically affected? (3) what is the current state of each of these sub-systems? (4) how ready are they for change? and, (5) how capable are they to make change?

(House et al., 1972). The literature is replete with the need for a Field Agent to: "encourage"; "listen"; "be positive"; "create"; "serve"; "communicate"; "persist"; and so forth (Becker, 1973; Cooke & Zaltman, 1972; Roling, 1971).

In brief, the implementation of a Field Agent concept, under present conditions, implies that a Field Agent, or team of Field Agents, can be educators, psychologists, anthropologists, organizational managers, diagnosticians, sociologists, and human relations engineers, with the authority to offer rewards and alter total systems. Rarely, if ever, is this, or could it be the case.

Indeed, the very fact that the concept 'change agent' is being operationalized in the way it is today, presents the dangerous effect of obfuscating the processes for change. With present conditions, the Field Agent, for the most part, is just another 'visible package'. Just as the tenured teacher tends to nestle into a security blanket of 'pat' answers, so does the Agent seek the comfort of 'producing results' and 'apparent onmiscience' in the daily 'successes' of quick how-to-do-it solutions that camouflage the problems rather than solve them.

It is the impression of this Agent that both employers and clients perceive the Field Agent function as one that counterpunches need with an immediate, simple change (i.e., recommends a new textbook or piece of equipment). Such superficiality is exemplified by Pincus' (1974) observation,

> There have been many innovations that have been adopted, but are often not successfully implemented. (A great many applications of new technologies, such as audio-visual equipment, . . . appear to fall into this category, as well as, in all probability, such new management techniques as . . . accountability, administrative decentralization or large districts, etc.) The impedimenta of these innovations--in the form of equipment, or a new set of management structures, or the vestiges of 'bold, new' curricula--remain beached by the wake of ephemeral educational revolutions while the system continues to operate as before [p. 117].

1. Aspects of Time:

It was recommended that an Agent attain a high degree of understanding of the culture that will be subjected to change (Sarason, 1971; Roling, 1971). An Agent must also be cognizant of the time factor and the part it plays in the function of the role. The interval of time required by an Agent to achieve an understanding of the target culture could be a deterrent for initiating innovation within a short time frame. This difficulty could be compounded because of the many anomalies in society's notion of education. A Field Agent, before pursuing a program of change, has a conflict between ignoring an anomaly and accepting the status quo, or dealing with it by introducing change. The path of least resistance may take the least amount of time, but it may lead to no destination at all. Indeed, the author of this thesis holds the view that improving education is not merely a matter of patching small rips in a fabric, but of treating the basic weakness of the whole cloth.

An Agent dealing with people must first elicit a bond

of trust which permits a revelation of the real needs that usually hide behind the voiced needs. The Agent may eventually achieve this, but then, as in Vermont, if there is a cynicism in attitude on the part of the client system toward the authority structure (State Departments), this, too, must be dealt with. With the passage of time, during which the focus is on the development of a trust relationship, Field Agents may confuse the establishment of trust as an 'end' instead of a 'condition' necessary for effective communication. Nevertheless, time is needed to develop a trust relationship before an accurate diagnosis and prescription can be attempted.

Because of the time it takes to understand a school culture, the 'wrong choice' of Field Agent may put the Agent on tenuous grounds. Agents of change from outside the school culture are too frequently ignorant of the culture in which change is to be introduced. On the other hand, if they are part of the culture, they are themselves very much a part of what needs changing.

Although there are common assumptions about change agents shared by most Agents, there are great individual variations in the strategies and tactics employed by different Agents. Louis & Sieber (1972) caution that some methods, if used to overemphasize problems, are perhaps unwise and may be ineffective. For example, in-depth diagnosis tends to antagonize some individuals who question

why outsiders assume that they have a better understanding than the people in constant contact with the situation. Of course, an external Agent can claim more objectivity. On the other hand, an internal Agent may develop helpful confidences. There are other time-consuming circumstances of obtaining insight to each component of the recipient system. Becker (1973) provides a perspective:

> The innovation, the users, the school system and other local conditions are likely to have unique characteristics that must be taken into account if proposed changes are to become accepted practices. The basic objectives of the new program and the nature of the audience are obviously important elements in designing a program for achieving adoption of an innovation. . . For example, if the persons making the decision about the innovation and the ultimate users are different groups, then separate approaches may have to be directed at each group in order to achieve the desired objective. If information, as well as persuasion, is needed, then separate efforts may be required for each process [p. 194].

To understand the machinery that requires change the Agent must 'stop the music,' brake the carrousel to a halt, and examine each tooth of the drive gear. Needless to say, many operators of the machine are obliged to keep their apparatus functioning in the usual way, as they cannot endure the frustrating time interval.

Furthermore, teachers vary on a number of dimensions such as grade level taught, type of student taught (retarded, disturbed, excelled), the area of subject matter specialization, length of teacher experiences, training background and sex. Yet, it should be recalled that they all feel

frustrated by the assumed necessity to have the class, as a unit, reach the same level of skill and material consumption in a fixed period of time. Modulation of such proportions by a Field Agent is like the task of changing a beach by displacing one grain of sand at a time.

2. Organizational Aspects:

The author of this thesis agrees with Beckhard (1969) that the basic building blocks of an organization are groups; therefore, the basic unit of change is the group, not individuals. While Beckhard's claim is noteworthy that reduction of inappropriate competition between parts of the organization is a relevant change goal, it is not only competition, but reduction in inappropriate differentiation of subject departments is equally important. Differentiation, as an end-product, decreases effectiveness because of problems in coordination, communication, and overwhelming conflict. Unfortunately, because of 'walled-in' classrooms and time-consuming tasks, teachers are predominantly educational 'loners'. They 'coffee' (and gossip) together, but they rarely plan education together. Their existing vehicles for discussion and planning within the school (faculty meetings, teacher-principal contacts, teacher-supervisor contacts) are based on the "principle of avoidance of controversy [Sarason, 1971, p. 71]." The Agent, striving for cooperation and collaboration must first integrate the teachers before the subject matter can be integrated.

A long time ago, Whitehead (1925) predicted:

> Another great fact confronting the modern world is the discovery of the methods of training professionals, who specialise in particular regions of thought and thereby progressively add to the sum of knowledge with their respective limitations of subject. In consequence of the success of this professionalizing of knowledge, there are two points to be kept in mind, which differentiate our present age from the past. In the first place, the rate of progress is such that an individual human being, of ordinary length of life, will be called upon to face novel situations which find no parallel in his past. The fixed person for the fixed duties, who in other societies was such a godsend, in the future will be a public danger . . . This situation has its dangers. It produces minds in a groove [p. 76].

When working with a group of teachers, the author of this dissertation failed to find evidences of open collaboration. More often than not, the participants behaved as if they were not part of a working or planning group. Teachers (and administrators) seemed to relish their autonomy despite their apparent identification with each other in regard to role and place of work. Perhaps these behaviors buffered their feelings of inadequacies and insecurities before a peer group. Where a workshop should promote a spirit of constructive collaboration, consensus only in negative reactions, that were attributed to psychologically-, sociologically- and politically-caused phenomena,were repeatedly observed.

But, the Agent cannot limit practice to one dimensional change, as exemplified by inspection of teacher feelings. Values and attitudes are a primary consideration in the change

process (Sarason, 1972), but evaluating personal issues is time consuming and certainly distracting.

Besides, in addition to the time factor, a human relations type training program does not necessarily produce organizational change. Most "group dynamics" workshops are not action-oriented in the sense of providing a connecting link between the training activity and the action planning which follows it. The Agent must establish a connection between human relations and school action, otherwise the intended results are deflected, or the 'bandaide' process intervenes.

Nevertheless, there is the conflict created in the choice of dealing with the school as a system, the teachers as groups of people, or the teachers as individuals. While the 'whole may be greater than the sum of its parts', the Agent cannot avoid confronting the uniqueness of each component person, because every person is subject to laws of individual psychology where his own private motives, capacities and perceptions are the causal variables. For the Agent, dealing with individuals as well as the system, "overload [Havelock, 1968]" now becomes an understatement. And with the time factor intervening, the Agent is forced either to limit activities to one school, or to interact simultaneously with several schools, and expend inadequate amounts of time with each client. Similar circumstances exist today between administration and teachers. They are

sure to generate negative reactions on the part of both the Agent and client and result in a fatal posture to any Field Agent notion.

3. Administrator Aspects:

There is little in research to provide a basis for understanding the process of diffusion of innovation in education, yet, a majority of the documented studies stress the fundamental importance of school administrators in school adoption decisions (Bockman, 1972; Carlson, 1965; Kreitlow, 1972; Peterfreund et al., 1970; Rogers, 1972; Sarason, 1971; Waller, 1967). Peterfreund and co-workers (1970) have proposed the necessity of a strong superintendent, since it is his leadership most often, which sets the tone of the school system.

> Interestingly, despite school board members' own definition of their policy-making role, what the role boils down to, especially in terms of innovative programs, is the board's evaluation of a person--the superintendent--rather than a program. If the board has faith in the man, the program is in; if not, usually it is the superintendent who is out [p. 7].

Most authors also propose the need for effective school level leadership from school principals. But the principals themselves say that so much of the time is occupied with administrative routine, that with only a few exceptions, they have little or no time to devote to long range planning for innovation (Peterfreund et al., 1970). Below is a chart showing rank order of what principals identify as most important versus time actually spent.

Ranked in order of Importance	Principal's Role	Ranked in actual time spent
1	Supervisor of Teachers	3
2	Developing Individual Child	5
3	Public Relations	2
4	Administration	1
5	Educational Leader	6
6	Innovator	8
7	Curricula Development	7
8	Student Liaison	4

[Peterfreund et al., p. 11]

And yet, in spite of the principal's 'overload', the Field Agent must collaborate with him as well as the Superintendent. Without a comprehensive flow of information to policy makers, any new era of experimentation is likely to end up as in the past--nowhere. The Agent, then, must discover the important relationships that exist among the teachers and administrators who adopt innovation (House et al., 1972).

The reader will recall the analysis of the personal and political factors that inhibit or induce the local administration to participate in change. Rogers (1965) stated that in 1965, about 2.5% of the educational administrators tended to be innovators. While this figure has changed, most Field Agents are still presented with the obstacle of having to explain and convince recalcitrant administrators of the desirability of change.

This author hastens to indicate that there are, however, implications for a Field Agent in administrative acceptance to change. A study questioning the basic educational change strategy, employed by the Office of Education and other top policy groups (House et al., 1972), concluded that

educational change is more dependent on personal attention and the internal workings of the school district than on an impersonal demonstration of carefully engineered products for practitioners. The study was based on twenty demonstration centers of a new model. In their evaluation of this demonstration program, House et al., (1972) noted that as a total group, the demonstration centers affected 29% of their visitors (judged by those who actually incorporated an innovation).

This is a highly respectable achievement, but there are some significant qualifications to consider. First, of the 3,000 teachers and 500 administrators who visited the centers during the 1968-1969 school year, a great many were interested in using the demonstration activities before going (34%), and another 8% had already decided to adopt them. Therefore, a large proportion of the population was self-selected by their predisposition to change. But more important, in their evaluation of the program, the researchers reveal,

> For administrators, the main factors associated with adopting an activity from a demonstration center were follow-up help from the center and the administrators' judgments (based on enthusiastic teachers and students) of how well the program worked. This follow-up was two kinds--passive or active. Active follow-up was far more important than the simple sending of material ... Of little importance were the perceived motivational value, appropriateness, worthiness of the program or the perceived ease of implementation, feasibility, reasons for adopting or rejecting or involvement with the home program. The perceptions of the intrinsic merits of the demonstration program were less important than the availability of outside help [p. 11].

It should be noted that the "worthiness of the program . . ." was of little value to the adopters, reinforcing McClelland's (1968) reducing to a myth the proposition that a good product will succeed on its own merits. This Agent affirms, however, that with a population freely disposed to innovation, the potential for an implementation of the Field Agent concept is infinite. This is not the case today. Moreover, this Agent agrees with Havelock (1968) that a good training program for leaders and practitioners would permit clients to perform as their own linkers. Technologically, people can be provided with easy access to resources, but only when the latter is available to self-critical, sensitive, and secure individuals will they be able to perform diagnosis and therapy for their own needs. Havelock (1968, p. 70) summarizes, "It is probably true that as knowledge utilization in a particular field improves over time, the need for intermediary roles declines." In fact, Kreitlow (1972) noted that where an educational system had established a line of communication between the central office and the schools, change information circulated freely in the absence of a change agent.

4. Teaching:

The indivisible unit of the educational system is the teacher in the classroom. No matter what organizational changes are made, and even with strong leadership, the hub of knowledge diffusion at the terminus, is the teacher. A

Field Agent's effectiveness is contingent upon the teachers' choice of accepting or rejecting the advice of the Agent. Naturally, their choice will be greatly influenced by their comprehension of the need for change. Like the ailing child who naively refuses the medicine prescribed by the doctor, there can be indiscriminate, uneducated rejection of an Agent's skills.

Thus, even if a Field Agent can bring to school advice based on the results of R&D experimentation, it may not necessarily be accepted. The most common complaint of the R&D community about adoptions is that the innovations cannot be, and are rarely implemented as prescribed, and so they never get a fair trial. The Agent's past experiences in teaching bristle with poorly assimilated, remedial reading method projects, and counterfeit 'ungraded' classrooms.

Teachers do adopt some new materials, but their choices are governed by conditioning in the concrete, piecemeal, teaching materials with which they are familiar (content, subject-matter oriented material), as opposed to evaluating the applicability of the materials to the learning process. The fact is, teachers adopt materials for reasons concerned with how well the new activity fits into the structure of their world (Peterfreund et al., 1970). In this context, the Field Agent is vexed by a problem of client schizophrenia. Professional educators hold forth the necessity and validity of "learning by doing." They announce that a major goal for

attainment in education is the achievement of the ability to solve one's own problems. They caution that it is poor teaching practice to "spoon feed" the solutions to students. Yet, when the Agent is invited to respond to a need, it is solely with the expectations that the Agent will supply the necessary, "cook-book," how-to-do-it answers that are supposed to be frowned upon. Thus, the Field Agent, in today's educational system, is truly a paradox in education; the role, as activated, is in direct contrast to the pathway to knowledge recommended by teacher training institutions.

The factors involved in teachers' resistance to change have been analyzed throughout the thesis. It should not be too surprising, then, that with the psychological, political and social factors that plague them, a transient 'changer' is often associated with dysfunctional, transitional consequences, and organizational disequilibrium. Understandably, those among the school populations have learned that if a 'stranger' comes into their midst, the odds are high that after this outsider leaves, he will have some unkind things to say. The 'stranger', after all, has been sent to view that school from a change orientation. Therefore, teacher resistance, seen in this light, is not only directed at change, but to the one who effects change as well. The symbolic blaze of 'change' accompanies an Agent like the flashing neons on a Broadway marquee.

A moot point is that the teachers are forced to rely on

outsiders who define solutions to problems in terms of what the teacher can do for the child; not for what can be done for the teachers. For example, an Agent can advise the teacher that more help, time, or individual attention should be given to 'Johnny'. More often than not, the teacher already knows this, but because of valid, extenuating circumstances, the teacher is simply unable to do this. Unless the Field Agent can change a system, the Agent, as well as the teacher, is often rendered powerless by forces beyond control.

E. Implementation of Change

The literature offers some direction toward a strategy of change. Chin's professional viewpoints on the levels of change are summarized in McClelland's (1968) treatise on the characteristics and methods of effecting change. Briefly, his review encompasses changes ranging from the easiest to hardest to implement: (a) replacement of an insulated unit is simplest (i.e., replacement of textbook); (b) alteration concomitant with workbook substitution (increases difficulty since new laboratory or equipment items may be unfamiliar to teacher); (c) systemic effects of even easy changes may cause "perturbations and variations" at other levels resulting in transient adjustment of equilibrium of the whole system; (d) more difficult is "restructuring," a fundamental change involving "basic social change" (i.e., a new school or curriculum); and (e) the

most difficult change of "value orientation" requires an effort to alter national character [pp. 9-10].

1. General Guidelines for change:

A guide to a strategy of change must include the characteristics of the potential user. McClelland (1968) refers to Guba's taxonomy in viewing the nature of the client:

Characteristic	Strategy
1) The client is rational and can be convinced by good data and logical evidence.	1) Change agent must believe
2) The client is untrained and must be taught how to perform the innovation.	2) Use workshops and in-service training.
3) The client can be persuaded.	3) Encourage self-actualization.
4) The client will respond to financial reward or deprivation.	4) Provide adequate funding.
5) The client can be influenced politically.	5) Pressures normally present.
6) The client is part of the bureaucracy.	6) Obtain peer bureaucratic approval of change.
7) The client is part of the profession.	7) Obtain peer approval of change.

Knowing the client's characteristics and possible modes of reaction to them can shed light on which strategy of change to use. This essential interplay needed to influence implementation has also been scrutinized by McClelland (1968). He outlines Chin's conceptualizations:

> a. Empirical-rational approaches in which the primary task is seen as one demonstrating through the best-known method the validity of the new mode in terms of the increased benefits . . .
>
> b. Normative-reeducative approaches...are usually based on some theory of change as applied to individual behavior in small groups, organizations, and communities...this family of change strategies concentrates on the pivotal role of values, on a 'people', not a 'thing' technology. Emphasis is placed on the way the client views himself and his problems . . .
>
> c. Power approaches...are used to alter conditions within which other people act by limiting alternatives or by shaping the consequences of their acts or by directly influencing and controlling actions. Compliance and submission are obviously involved in this process of change . . . [pp. 12-13].

From the above considerations, one must conclude, as does McClelland (1968), that guidelines to the implementation of change are, at the moment, crude and not very encouraging. The selection of a strategy depends upon up-to-the minute knowledge of the complexity of the innovation; of the availability of structural, financial and manpower resources, and, direct confrontation with diverse personalities of leadership and actual users. Irrespective of the choice of an appropriate approach to implementation, an objective evaluation of the success of both the strategy of diffusion and the innovation must be included. McClelland (1968) courageously attempts to formulate a "pre-model [p. 14]" for change while apologizing that the "approach

contains elements of the tragic and futile [p. 14]."[29] Nevertheless, two extensive paradigms for adoption and evaluation of innovation are shown. Figure 4 is the one presented by McClelland (1968). In Figure 5, Peterfreund and his associates (1970) present a tool for evaluation through analysis of conditions within schools. This tool provides a clear and concise scheme for identifying whether or not a district, or its schools, has a predisposition for innovation. The absence or presence (or partial presence) of the conditions needed for innovation should predict the likelihood that innovation can or cannot occur. It is, at present, the most adequate inventory in the literature of change.

29"One way to present a summation of what we know about change and to indicate how we may become better students and practitioners of the process is to attempt a formulation of a pre-model. While this approach contains elements of the tragic and futile, it has contemporary appeal. I shall proceed along these lines, mindful of, but unswayed by, O'Connell's injunction: 'Obviously, it is too early for a general theory of organizational change. The social scientists involved can have faced only a narrow range of situations in application of their somewhat restricted techniques'. He goes on to ask if we can answer such specific questions as:

-Is there a best way to manage organizational change in complex business enterprises?

-Is there a trustworthy formula for planning and controlling shifts in the programmed sets of behavior patterns that make up organizations?

Well, I can answer such questions: The answer is 'No'. [p. 14]."

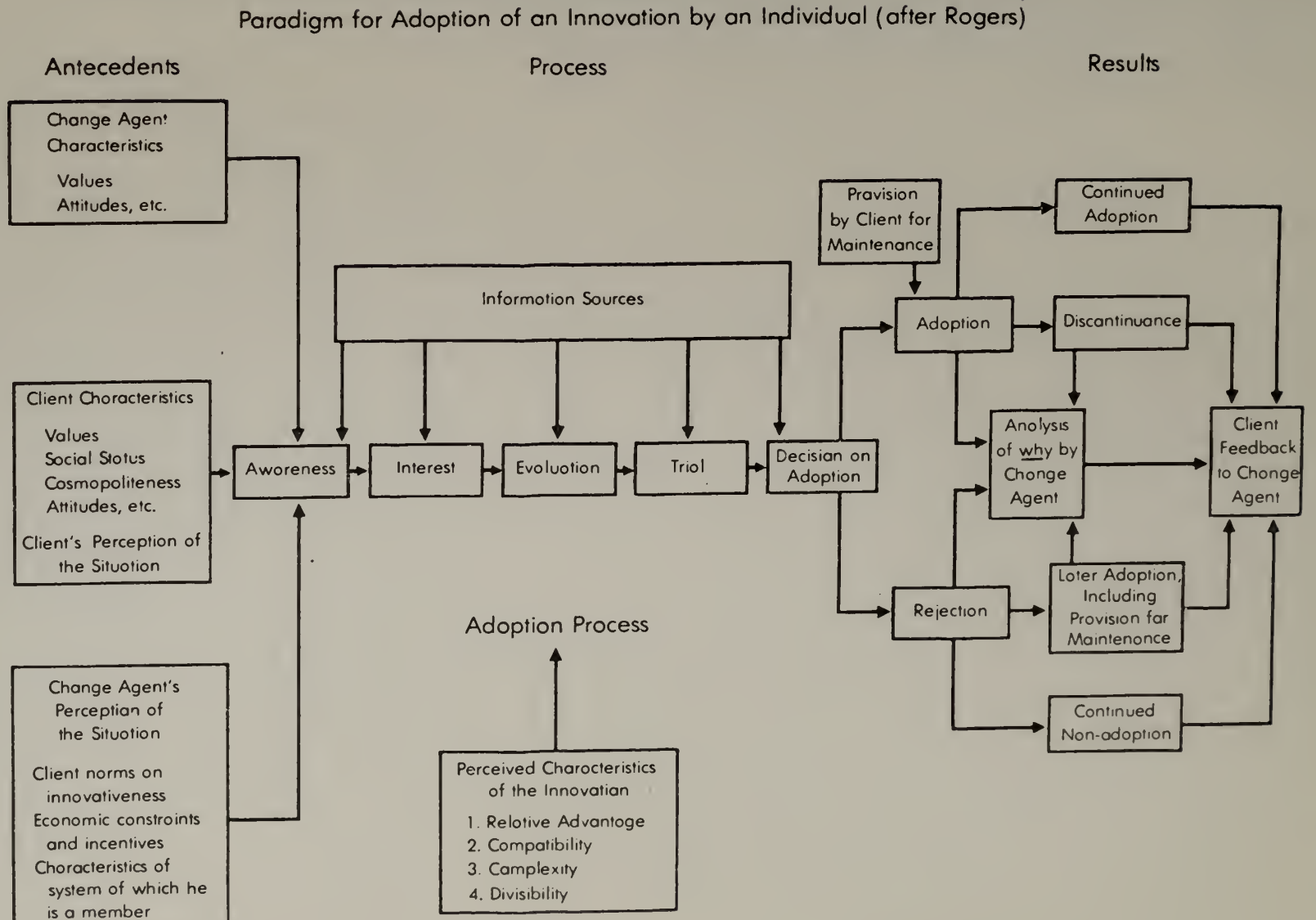

Figure 4 [McClelland, 1968, p. 18]

Figure 5

CONDITIONS/PREREQUISITES FOR INNOVATION IN A SCHOOL SYSTEM

SYMBOLS OF INNOVATION IN A SCHOOL SYSTEM

1. An articulated set of goals or objectives for the district and schools.

→

1. The Goals
- Developing the self-concept of students
- Preparing individuals for society, whatever role they're capable of
- Giving each individual the opportunity to learn what he needs according to his own capacity
- Recognizing that education must provide for individual differences
- Recognizing that certain parts of the environment may be hostile to learning and developing alternate approaches to change the environment
- Recognizing that the learning needs of today's society have changed
- Relates goals to community and its needs; believes in relevancy of education

2. Leadership of the district:
- Superintendent is supporter and implementer of goals
- Has defined personal objectives
- Leader and motivator of the system's personnel
- Can recognize and foster innovations and create environment in which innovation takes place

→

2. Leadership of the district
- Superintendent dominates the school board, has its support
- Positive reactions by system's personnel to superintendent as a leader
- His presence attracts people to the system and encourages them to remain
- His philosophy is reflected by others in the system
- Committed to his goals for more than to his job

3. Management of the district:
- Organization of district to permit implementation of goals
- A communication climate in which ideas flow up and down the line
- Involvement of staff -- all levels -- in design and planning innovation

→

3. Management of the District
- Reorganization of departments and functions to accomplish goals
- Preparation of staff to manage innovations
- Recognition that professional managerial and administrative skills are necessary
- Systems approach to operating district
- Establishing two-way communication programs between teachers, students community, administration
- Having a variety of communication media
- Managing communication
- Extending participation into the classroom -- committees
- System for testing, review and revision of innovations
- Participation across levels and between levels
- A management Information System

CHARACTERISTICS OF A TRADITIONAL SCHOOL SYSTEM

1. Traditional grade pattern
2. Generally group students according to levels of ability
3. One teacher classroom
4. Conventional classroom -- self-contained
5. Conventional grading systems
6. Visitors discouraged
7. Autocrat administrator/ disciplinarian
8. Teachers and students are static/students go to teacher
9. Little or no independent study programs for individual students
10. Homework, tests
11. Partial utilization of school plant
12. Lesson plans required
13. Retention of students who "fail"
14. Reliance on one or more conventional textbooks
15. Oriented to learning individual subjects in a compartmentalized fashion
16. Lecture, and drill and practice mode of instruction

In traditional schools, it is the student who passes or fails, not the teacher, or the system.

4. Characteristics of the teaching staff.
- Ability to define role as that of enabling students to learn
- Recognize individual students by their differences and design appropriate learning program for them
- Understands community environment
- Desire to be in policy-making decisions about curriculum, working environment
- Wants to work with other teachers in planning, design and teaching
- Welcomes assistance of paraprofessionals
- Strong sense of professionalism, teaching regarded as career
- Continue professional development, in-service and graduate courses
- Feeling of self-confidence and success

→

4. Characteristics Of The Teaching Staff And The Teaching Environment

a. Role:
- Diagnose student needs, learning difficulties
- Prescribes or designs and plans learning programs for the individual student
- Sets objectives for the lesson, for students, and measures the accomplishment of them
- Gives the students a role in designing the learning program

b. Methods:
- Team teaching
- Inductive/discovery method
- Inter-disciplinary approach
- Can accommodate to different instructional methods, depending on need
- Independent study programs
- Uses paraprofessional in the instructional process
- Flexible, modular scheduling

c. Accepts As An Integral Part Of The Instructional Process:
- The computer in problem solving, CAI
- Audio-visual equipment
- Learning and resource centers
- Television
- Other machines, devices to individualize instruction

d. Use of Such Programs As:
- IPI
- ITA
- FLES
- PSSC physics
- SMSG math
- SRA reading

e Professional Outlook:
- Attends educational conferences, seminars (voluntary versus compulsory)
- Professional association membership
- In-service/graduate courses for professional development
- Teacher association/union members and attitudes toward:
  - -- Improving salaries
  - -- Working conditions
  - -- Evaluation, professional standards
  - -- belief in merit pay
  - -- Desire to change automatic tenure system
  - -- Number of students per class of less concern

5. Leadership in school:
- Principals endorse, implement goals
- Motivate teachers
- Recognize and foster innovation, create environment in which innovation can take place
- Involve their teachers

→

5. Leadership in Schools
- Introduces specific innovation, changes from traditional ways of doing things
- Has committees in which teachers take primary role
- Accessible -- open door for teacher/students
- Frequent visits to classrooms
- Formal teacher evaluations
- Attends educational conferences and encourages teachers to do the same
- Active program of community relations
- Encourages strong student representation
- Spends more time as instructional leader than administrator
- Has a system for communications (meetings, bulletins, individual review of programs)

6. Financial:
- Ability to secure outside funds, and retain discretion over use
- Financial resourcefulness; focus on getting most for money

→

6. Financial
- Cost effectiveness (relating educational value received for the cost)
- Professional money management
- Awareness of outside support resources
- Discretionary funds available

7. Dissatisfaction with the status quo, with the curriculum -- in its traditional form

→

7. Curriculum -- Substance and Content
- Nongraded
- Utilizing experts in and outside the system to develop curriculum
- Setting detailed behavioral and learning objectives in the curriculum
- Relevance to environment, and to needs of students, to the times
- Introduction of new subjects (sciences, consumer education courses, sex education, black studies, occupational education, computers, etc.)
- Continuous updating, review, revision of curriculum
- Internally developed curriculum
- Involvement of the teacher and students in curriculum development
- Redesign of buildings to accommodate curriculum changes
- Offering increased number of courses
- Varying the length of the teaching day

THE DYNAMICS OF INNOVATION
- How many changes have been introduced
- Is change a continuing or a sporadic and/or erratic process
- How rapidly are changes implemented
- How rapidly do they move from experimental to pilot to the accepted mode
- How recently have the changes (at least the major ones) occurred
- Has the change pattern itself been speeding up, or slowing down
- When opportunities for change exist, do they seize them (i.e. -- is a new school likely to be different from the one before)

[Peterfound et al, 1970, p. 13]

F. The Agricultural Model

Although some educators have attempted to define the role of the Field Agent in context of the linker concept, the layman perusing the literature may be overwhelmed with the ramifications. Usually, an existent analogy can reduce any bewilderment experienced upon exposure to a new idea. In the instance of the Field Agent concept, comparative analogies in education were nonexistent. The originators of the Field Agent program, the U. S. Office of Education, perceived the function of the Field Agent to be similar to that of the Agricultural Extension Agent (AEA).

The disparities, however, become apparent when diffusion efforts, type of products, clientele, time, and advantages of implementation are compared. Briefly, the AEA, at the moment of arrival, promises economic improvement if the client tries the innovation, and indeed, if adopted, the results are usually seen rapidly (concrete). The Field Agent cannot do this because of the significant absence of a science of education for most educators. Without such a science, there can be no predictability. Also, the AEA link is usually (not always) made to only one individual. For the AEA, the sell is more like a simple, but clear melody played on one instrument; the sell of the Field Agent calls for the blending of all the instruments in an entire symphony to activate harmonious vibrations in each component of the whole educational system.

The County Extension Agent is well recognized as a change agent as far as farming practices are concerned. In contrast, up to 1965, it was believed that there was no one to perform a similar role for educational practice. There was no office of public education that had the responsibility for the advocacy of change and, therefore, it was felt that the slowness of change in the educational practices was due to absence of a change agent analogous to the County Extension Agent. Whereas it was once assumed that the change advocate role should be taken by the local school system through the office of the superintendent, it was felt that there was an obvious difficulty. That is, the County Extension Agent always operates outside, and free from the farm unit being subjected to change. On the other hand, the school superintendent, as a change agent, is a central part of the unit defined as the change objective. Being in and of the organization, the function of change advocacy for the school superintendent would be difficult for the same reasons an internal agent would have difficulty, and because frequently the change prescribed was of his own practice! It was also felt that in addition to the lack of the change agent, schools were handicapped in change-activity by the weakness of a knowledge base for new educational practices. The AEA, on the other hand, knows substantially more than the superintendent about the changes needed and how to address them. Plants, for example, behave more predictably than people, so they are a less complex phenomenon.

Also there are more concerted efforts in the study of plants from a scientific point of view in order to see what facilitates their growth.

The County Extension Agent is backed by very extensive and practical R&D. Because his training involved implementation of innovation, this type of change agent holds a favored position in judging and demonstrating the merits of innovation. It is often stated that one of the reasons for the slowness of educational adoption of innovation as compared with agricultural, medical, or industrial acceptance is the absence of scientific resources in education. This may, in part, be true. But, as has been pointed out, the pace of indoctrination is also governed by the receptivity of the clientele that the innovation has been designed for. Certainly, the Agent of this dissertation feels that in being sponsored by Anisa, an R&D model, there was a sound, scientific approach in training the Agent.

Others have applied various criteria in comparing the linkage function of the Agricultural Agent and the Field Agent in education. Havelock (1968) curtails the description of extension agents as being one-way communicators, since they are solidly entrenched in a university, the base of their operations. They pass on R&D data packaged for ready use by farmers. The Field Agent, on the other hand, creates a well-worn, two-way path. Louis & Sieber (1972) perceive several structural differences between the Agricultural and Field Agent roles and elaborate them as follows,

1. That the agricultural field agent works with individual farmers, who are relatively autonomous. The new educational Field Agent, however, deals with individuals located in formal organizations of some complexity. The educational Field Agent must, therefore, work with power structures, formal and informal groups within the organization, and the barriers to access in innovation that results in these factors;
2. The agricultural field agent's job is to push certain innovations for farming techniques. The job of the Field Agent is to solicit the needs of the educational population. Also, ... to identify the felt needs of the educators;
3. The agricultural field agent is in direct contact with the research source; that is, the School of Agriculture of the State University. In some cases, the Field Agent is not in direct contact with the researchers and therefore, must look to other sources;
4. The agricultural field agent, although he must deal with resistance to innovation, has the advantage of working with a population that is motivated to adopt the best practices for their own economic good. The Field Agents, however, must deal with individuals and groups that are not economically motivated;
5. The results of the agricultural field agent's work are usually quite visible, but the Field Agent's product is more difficult to assess. There was little consensus among educators on the desirability of specific educational structures or practices, much less on the best means of achieving these ends [p. 4].

The author or this dissertation wishes to point out that in reference to item 3 above, there was some parallelism with the AEA. The author, as an educational Field Agent, was in direct contact with and backed by a team of researchers at the University of Massachusetts. Also, it is appropriate to mention that there is a similarity between the agricultural and educational change agents in that both are highly responsive to consumer demands. The latter, however, has to negotiate with a system.

G. Conclusions

The change process is a serious and massive problem. Laws or mandates are not enough. Change cannot be legislated or effected unless the conditions for change can be created. This creation demands not only an involvement with the total educational environment, but the vital consideration of its component parts, i.e.: the ecology of the school, the political, social, government, community, administrative, financial, and, individual factors. Fragmentary knowledge diffusion, tunnel-visioned specialization, preclusive information flow, insecurities, and fear of change are nourished by the diffusiveness of educational goals and lack of consensus.

The nature of change, and the conscious process for change are poorly understood, and historically limited in precedence. "There is no trustworthy formula for planning and controlling shifts in the programmed sets of behavior patterns that make up organizations [McClelland, 1968, p. 14]."

NEPTE visualized the original Vermont Field Agent as opening doors to curriculum and system change through evaluation. It then predicted exposure and treatment capability of the underlying problems when the surface problems were solved. This Field Agent concurs with the NEPTE projections, but points out the present futility in trying to help most clients grasp the whole concept of change in such a short time. It is extremely difficult to implement any concept whereby, in order to effect change, the first phase appears to require

extensive education and not stimulation of action. The change pay-off will not be evident until the skills and abilities learned in the educational phase are applied. Only after the second stage of application can the effectiveness of the action be judged. It is like opening Pandora's box and being faced with the psychological, structural, and financial complexities. Both phases of the process are long, drawn out procedures. While the Field Agent may serve the purpose of making inroads to an introduction of the needs, or an awareness that problems exist, it would be less costly and time consuming to eliminate the need for change by initially instituting a teacher training program that contains great flexibility in responding to the constantly changing environment.

On the basis of experience as an educational Field Agent, the author of this thesis experienced ineffectual performance in terms of the NEPTE theory of the function of a change Agent. Despite having a position of Agent in a representative State educational system (VSDE), while maintaining ties with a university resource (Anisa), and an educational development organization (NEPTE), the tasks assigned to this Field Agent were predominantly at the desk level of the Department. Personal contacts with Administrators were cursory or elusive, and few opportunities were available to meet with the entire line of command.

Many objectives for the improvement of quality education

had been formulated, but the Field Agent role was minimized or neglected. Failure to utilize the Field Agent in a master plan of implementation diminished the usability of R & D support commanded by the Agent. In addition, wary attitudes on the part of the clients penalized innovation and thus the Agent was more of an observer than contributor. Individual trust development did occur but was far too limited to involve significant numbers of users, particularly those in power positions, to freely participate in open exchange of problems and knowledge with the Agent.

Various degrees of disappointment dulled the enthusiasm of this Agent. On the other hand, the few positive interactions revealed glimmers of sincere interest in initiating new concepts relevant to contemporary society. There was uniformity of 'expressed' concern with how to mobilize a concerted effort of all levels of manpower and sufficient budgetary resources.

Assuming sincerity on the part of those at least willing to discuss change, the compelling question of adequate diffusion rates and processes is formidable. This Agent believes that educational programs for teachers must have a major focus on the management of change. This should be considered essential in bringing out the basic skills and abilities necessary for change for anyone in the profession of teaching. Such teachers will eventually become administrators and may have a greater chance of developing

effective mechanisms for introducing innovation into an educational system. Moreover, such enlightened leaders are more likely to respond to changing social needs than propagate conceptions centered on preserving existing institutional order. They will look to the road of change rather than gaze in the rear-view mirrors (Rogers, 1965).

On the basis of the analysis, the author concludes that the Field Agent, in today's system, is a premature anachronism. An Agent alone cannot:

1. deal with resistance to change;
2. change the conflict in values in society;
3. create the conditions for change;
4. establish the processes for change;
5. provide needed assistance and support in the form of management, money, manpower, and time.

The Agent is not only powerless to surmount the difficulties inherent in today's situation, but an Agent can, in fact, bog down intended change. Unless those in education are prepared to cope with change in the first place, Agent efforts will bounce off the change barrier as a single pellet from a slingshot richochets off a fortress. Time magazine (December 30, 1974) presents what the Agent believes to be an effective analogy for today's educational state and the implications for its reformation: "When asked what can be done to revive the G.O.P., McCall [retiring Governor Tom McCall of Oregon] turns skeptical: 'The question is, are

we still on the ship or are we already in the life boats? No fundamental changes can occur until someone admits that we're no longer on the ship. . . .' [p. 13]."

H. Recommendations

Systemic change is unlikely if it depends on a single Agent or team of Agents working with those in a system who are not trained in a science of change, and who lack the vision and abilities to plan for change, thus the attitudes to undertake change in the first place. Therefore, two basic recommendations are proposed: one of prevention, the other of remediation.

1. Prevention (Teacher Training):

This writer affirms that the prime force of leverage for change originates in relevant teacher training; not in prescribed and prodigious expenditures of money, time, and effort in order to "unlearn" the conditioned past. Teacher training is essentially a preventive approach.

The need for relevant, initial teacher training is explicit; both from an educational and economical point of view. Teachers, in order to acquire the behavior of professionals, need first the same skills that comprise the educational goals to be achieved by the child. That is, all teachers must have a conscious awareness of all processes that underly the attainment of learning competence in order to accommodate and adapt to any situation.

> Because of the rapidity of social change and the speed with which the future pours into the present,

> competence in learning will insure survival in the future, for it is learning competence that provides maximum adaptive flexibility and the capacity not only to tolerate change but to take an active role in directing it [Jordan & Streets, 1972, p. 28].

With good education and training, it is possible for teachers to understand the process of change, to manage conflict, and to develop a tolerance for the ambiguity associated with change. With an understanding of, and tolerance to change, teachers will face risk with less inhibition or impulsivity and apply logical thinking.

Training should develop a philosophy of education that defines the gossamer, intuitive, values of the present that are so much in need of clarification. Most important, teacher training should insure the genuinely professional teacher whose technical confidence is exercised in the context of a theory.[30] With the guidelines of an adequate theoretical foundation, teachers can reach the point at which decisions are made on the basis of objectivity, information sources, and relevance, rather than on subjectivity and organizational role. Maslow (1968) elucidates,

> His cognition and his behavior...can mold itself ...to the problematic...situation in its intrinsic

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[30] A theory is a statement of assumptions or propositions (truths) about particular phenomena. It defines and provides an explanation of how these phenomena are related. Theory can thus function as a consistent guide to practice (Anisa). It is not an impractical view of things; set of values; or a statement of what 'ought' to be. (See Sarason's plea for a theory of change, p. 186, Chapter IV of thesis.)

> 'out there' terms or demands (rather than in ego-centered or self-conscious terms), in terms set by the per se nature of the task, or duty. It...is more improvised, extemporized, impromptu... [p. 108].

Once teachers are guided by a theory, then they are maximally free; they have an infinitude of generativity. When they discover they have choices, they are activated to consider alternatives and to set priorities.

Teacher education should be committed to stay in line with the tempo and needs of our time. It must instill in the teachers an ongoing capacity for change, that is, to form and reform, shape and reshape education's priorities.

Teacher training can reveal that there is no specific, unchanging set of curricula materials that are guaranteed to engage the attention of students. Rather, the learning experience is a process, solidified by an interaction with circumstances, people, methods, and materials, separate or combined, to provide a situation that can be intellectually justified by the teacher, and intellectually stimulating to the student. Toffler (1971) postulates,

> For education, the lesson is clear; its prime objective must be to increase 'the individual's cope-ability'--the speed and economy with which he can adapt to continual change. And the faster the rate of change, the more attention must be devoted to discerning the pattern of future events. . . . It is no longer sufficient for Johnnie to understand the past. It is not even enough for him to understand the present, for the here-and-now environment will soon vanish. Johnnie must learn to anticipate the directions and rate of change. He must, to put it technically, learn to make repeated, probablistic, increasingly long-range assumptions about the future. And so must Johnnie's teachers [p. 403].

In summary, Toffler is suggesting, no, demanding, that education deal with the unexpected, but possible problems that do not exist at the moment.

Relevant teacher education can develop within the individual an ability to evaluate innovation before installing it. Evaluation by the potential user diminishes the endemic misuse of innovation and promotes a self-reliant behavior that counteracts fear and insecurity.

Others have also encouraged achievement for professionalism. (Educational Change Foundation, personal communication, July 27, 1974):

> ...on the personal level, individuals who wisely keep themselves several steps ahead of the changes ...who increase both their academic skills and their personal ability to make perceptive professional decisions...will find continuing opportunities for professional, intellectual and personal growth in the years ahead...In short, higher levels of both competence and perception are going to be required as a matter of course.

With the need for cope-ability, a major target of change is attitudes. Innovative arrangements and approaches require a sharing of power and relinquishing of ownership over some key decisions. The education of teachers and administrators can focus on this, both in the context of change, and the management of imposed, bureaucratic limitations. In a speech given at Lesley College, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Broudy (1974) sardonically commented:

> Schools preparing teachers today are caught in a crossfire between the assaults of the efficiency brigade and the counter culturalists. The efficiency forces want accountability for literacy,

> some basic knowledge, and holding power. To play the accountability game, the 'product' must be identified, measured, and priced. Teachers, in this view, are products of teacher training institutions, and they, too, must be held accountable for their products. Performance based curricula are the presumably possible answers. Teach the teacher to perform an identifiable task and then check performance. In principle, this slicing up of the teaching act is not impossible, if one leaves out all outcomes that cannot be reduced to overt behaviors.

The accountability syndrome stated above is consistent with the bandaide therapy thinking of today. Teacher training should supply the teachers with guidelines within which change can take place, and not a 'cookbook' of tasks or performances. Being able to perform correctly does not necessarily entail knowing why one is performing correctly, and if educational theory is not demonstrably functional in a correct performance, neither is general education. As competent professionals, teachers can have the conscious awareness of what they know, and therefore will use it. As early as the 1920's, textbooks suggested innovations that are still being advocated, but have not permeated into the teaching methodology. McClelland (1968) quotes a somewhat cynical clue to the present situation in the field of education, offered by Schmuck,

> The lack of knowledge utilization is truly social-psychological in the sense that it involves both parties simultaneously interlocked in a complex set of ineffective communications [p. 8].

McClelland (1968) also repeats an equally general and valid observation made by Rankin and Blanke. He says that there

are two assumptions that recur frequently in the literature on educational change: (a) there is a large gap between theory and practice, and (b) special organizations must be created and individuals trained to bridge this gap if educational improvement is to be consistent, effective and, efficient.

Furthermore, efficient teacher training can make a notable difference for teachers who often change from one school system to another, and for the teachers who eventually become part of the administration as they move up the educational hierarchy. The teachers, and the teachers-turned-administrators, with an educational philosophy in common, and a theoretical basis to guide them, will sustain consistency in their ways of thinking and acting, no matter where they are.

There seems to be little room for compromise. The need for relevancy in our educational institutions demands a relevancy in our teacher training. Without agreement on pedagogical guidelines, and consistency of goals based on a theory of education, there can be no paradigm for the present that provides a solid ground for self-sufficiency and positive action on which to elect a future. Only in this way will it be possible for the educator to establish a knowledge base that differentiates 'good' practice from 'bad' practice, and avoid a lapse in thinking that 'ends' and 'means' are different things or processes. Goddu & Ducharme (1970) recapitulate,

> When we look at many of the past teacher training programs, we find few based on an attempt to relate existent theories of learning, to preparing people for taking on roles which support, demonstrate, and develop learning. Most of the training programs for teachers have operated on the principle that if we talk about teaching to the people who are entering the profession, and then, present successful patterns of teaching verbally or visually to them, they will then become successful practitioners [p. 431].

One must foresee that education will not be a pounding in of factual knowledge. It will be a management process in which provision for obtaining all the educational tools and materials will be made to enable students to learn at their own paces, capabilities and potentialities.

Until re-vamping of teacher training is complete, then, the Field Agent concept, under suitable conditions, can and must only function as an initial stage in its own 'becoming'. Procedures will change with experience, and as the procedures change, then the possible and the impossible can be sorted out.

2. Remediation (In-Service Programs):

The Field Agent role can be recast so that it can be more effective in introducing some change in the field through in-service programs.

For those already in the teaching system, then, an experimental setting providing practical experience in the

process of change, for the opinion leaders[31] among their peer groups, bolstered with definitive, on-going guidance and R&D availability, may be a logical route. The Field Agent may be interposed at this level in the role of trainer (Havelock, 1968), providing the teachers with the opportunities to (a) identify and clarify problems; (b) seek out R&D paradigms; (c) evaluate the different designs; (d) assess the designs for their effectiveness towards a solution to the problems identified; and, (e) collaborate in the implementation of a solution. The Field Agent may also be interposed at any level as consultant (Havelock, 1968), using the needs expressed as gateway to analysis of the underlying problems, and as entry to reformation.

But such situations represent a minimum way of infiltrating the whole system, as well as a demand of time and rewards, like money and prestige (Kreitlow, 1972).

Using this approach may bring about some improvement, if some conditions are met.

For any approach, at any level, the Field Agent, personally, must not only possess the characteristics heretofore

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[31]Havelock (1968), tentatively refers to the "large body of literature supporting the view that the vast majority of those who eventually adopt new ideas do so because they are influenced by some other members of their group. When this pattern of imitation is focused on one particular person and is stable over time . . . we can speak of 'opinion leadership' [pp. 77-78]."

described (Chapter I, pp. 33-34, Chapter III, pp. 102-104,111) but in view of the current resistance to change that pervades the school system, the Field Agent must also be regarded by others as legitimate in the role of change. One has only to refer to the body of this dissertation for proof that unless those in the supporting agency perceive the Agent's role as valid, then certainly the client system will not! (If the VSDE had perceived the Agent as the "Vermont Field Agent in Education," it follows that they would have introduced her as such, and acted accordingly (see Chapter III, pp. 119-126). Thus, if the Field Agent role is to be operative as a means of introducing change through in-service programs, both those in the linking institution of which the Agent is a part, and the Agent must have:

1. a clear definition[32] of the role;
2. a commitment to the success of that role;
3. a plan for introduction to those in the client system;
4. a system for ongoing support in order to stimulate requests and initiate contact;
5. a respect for the amount of time needed to perform the role; and,

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[32]The author wishes to emphasize that "definition" should not be synonymous with "inhibition and specificity of task assignments." Any one of the definitions presented in Chapter III (pp. 102-104) can provide a basis for flexibility, and unlimited style in performance. It is mandatory, however, that there be absolute agreement among all participants in the semantics of each word in the definition.

6. a total awareness of the need for a feedback paradigm that presupposes constant, open, benevolent confrontation and collaboration towards the refinement of that role.

I. Summary

Only when each and every level within the educational profession has the responsibility to act knowledgeably will the unit decisions converge in their attentions toward a central theme affecting the whole system. The following recommendations speak to the prerequisites of an effective Educational Field Agent Program. These prerequisites set forth ideal conditions,none of which will enhance the effectiveness of any Field Agent who takes up the task of initiating educational change. Thus, the recommendations can be used as principles for long-range educational planning and as tools for understanding why particular difficulties are encountered, or given programs fail. There must be:

1. an agreed upon philosophy of education within the entire system of education;

2. clearly defined and articulated goals for education that are process oriented, relevant, and operationalized;

3. professional leadership within each district that is flexible, creates an environment for and supports relevant educational innovations, and appreciates those within the education profession;

4. organization of a system that establishes a collaborative climate, and a line of communication in which ideas flow freely at all levels, and are assessed knowledgeably by groups within various levels of the educational hierarchy;

5. school leadership that involves teachers and students in planning, encourages innovation and creativity,

and keeps parents informed of the reasons why;

6. teachers who are secure, flexible, and comfortable in the knowledge that they understand, implement, and can explain what education is all about, and that others feel that way about them, too;

7. a recognition that time and money are important requisites for innovation;

8. a Field Agent, or Field Agents, trained in the science of change;

9. a supportive environment for the Field Agents (see previous conditions for Field Agent), and,

10. cooperative relationships between R&D centers, universities, Field Agents both intra- and inter-state, and educators in the field.

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APPENDIX A

SCOPE OF WORK

Vermont Field Agent Project

This document represents a three-way agreement among the following parties:

New England Program of Teacher Education (NEPTE)
Vermont State Education Department (SDE)
ANISA-NEPTE Project

The following are the contractual agreements of the above named parties:

NEPTE

1. NEPTE will provide for the monitoring of the Vermont Field Agent Project and will request monthly progress reports.

2. NEPTE will serve as fiscal agent.

3. NEPTE will provide financial resources in the total amount of . . . for the support of the Vermont Field Agent Project of 4 man days per week from November 15, 1973, through June 30, 1974.

4. NEPTE will provide part time secretarial support service for the project.

SDE

1. The SDE will determine the allocation of services of the ANISA-NEPTE Project through the Director of Planning Services of the State Education Department.

2. The SDE will determine four projects to receive the major impact from services from the ANISA-NEPTE Project personnel.

3. The SDE through the Director of Planning Services and the ANISA-NEPTE Project Director will collaborate in the scheduling of services to the projects.

4. The SDE will provide periodic reports to NEPTE.

5. The SDE will insure that the projects selected to receive the services from ANISA-NEPTE Project personnel will focus on planning, curriculum, and staff development.

ANISA-NEPTE Project

1. A maximum of 4 man days per week will be provided from personnel of the ANISA-NEPTE Project through the Coordinator, Ms. Lois Abeles.

2. ANISA-NEPTE will determine the breakdown of the total budget for NEPTE approval.

3. ANISA-NEPTE Project will submit monthly reports to the SDE who will forward the reports to NEPTE.

4. Distribution of services will be jointly determined by the SDE through the Office of the Director of Planning Services and the ANISA-NEPTE Project through its Coordinator. On an average the distribution of services would be as follows:

   4 man-days per month to each of the following divisions:

   Division of Teacher & Continuing Education
   Division of Federal Programs
   Division of Elementary & Secondary Education
   Division of Planning Services

5. The Vermont Field Agent, Ms. Lois Abeles, will meet weekly with the Director of Planning to assess and plan next steps.

NEPTE, Director	Deputy Commissioner
ANISA-NEPTE Project Director	Director of Teacher Education
Vermont Field Agent	Director of Federal Programs
Date	Director of Elementary & Secondary Education
	Director of Planning

APPENDIX B

STATE OF VERMONT
Department of Education
Montpelier
05602

(COPY)

To: Participants on January 25 . . . PBTE Workshop

From: . . .

Subject: . . . PBTE Workshop

Date: January 14, 1974

The Workshop for Local Certification Programs will be held on January 25, as scheduled, at the . . . Elementary School . . .

The planning committee met on January 9 and decided that their purpose is to have the teachers informed and to ask them to think about the local plan in broad terms. (Other workshops have had teachers write sample plans, but they will not want their teachers to do that, except possibly to suggest briefly what they might like to do professionally.) There will be two small discussion group sessions at which your help will be needed. The morning group will be mixed by grade and school and will react to my general information presentation of the morning. Afternoon groups will be based on school or other personal preference. These groups will be asked to complete a survey sheet prepared by the local committee.

Your role: There will be six tables of about 10 people each. Your function will be to persistently stress that the purpose of both groups is to determine what they think is best, ideal, needed, desired for a locally controlled inservice education and certification plan--as contrasted with "What the state wants" (you will have to refer some of those questions to me.)

Orientation: . . .

APPENDIX C

STATE OF VERMONT
Department of Education
Montpelier
05602

(COPY)

February 14, 1974

Mrs. Lois Abeles

Dear Lois:

Just to make our conversation at the . . . workshop official I am sending you the following few notes.

If you look at the pages on paraprofessionals in the regulations I think you will be able to see that there is a lot of freedom as to program content in the certification of paraprofessionals.

Just to back up your efforts whatever they may be on paraprofessionals, let me say that any program or paraprofessional certification acceptable to school districts that you have developed either with an individual or with that school district, has the endorsement of the State Department of Education. Specifically, if you set up a program that seems beautiful and you feel that it is equivalent of the course of work hours that are specified in the regulations at any level, we will back you up in that determination if any back-up is required.

With regard to inservice professional programs developed by individuals for inservice education the same vote of confidence applies. Here, as with paraprofessionals, the ideas would be included as part of the district plan.

Sincerely yours,

. . .
Teacher and Continuing Education

APPENDIX D

Anisa

AMERICAN NATIONAL INSTITUTES FOR SOCIAL ADVANCEMENT

8 February 1974

(COPY)

. . .
Bennington, Vermont

Dear . . .:

Thank you for sending the curricula materials that I requested. They certainly represent a good deal of thought and planning. I look forward to pleasurable and provocative interaction with you and your educators!

From the readings, the Bennington Plan is very exciting; so are the procedures outlined in the Industrial Arts Program. But I must comment on your History Department and their Social Studies! They are really good--from every aspect! How refreshing to find some educators in the classroom who actually try to ". . . instill in its students the realization that there is no conclusion to the educational process." Bravo! So many of us tend to be content-oriented rather than process-oriented. So many of us are guilty of using the beginning and the end of the semester year as just that--a beginning and an end!

From an ANISA point of view, the entire curriculum incorporates major areas for development, i.e., moral reasoning, affect, cognition, perception, volition, (purpose) or goals (motivation to act in community affairs), creativity, independence, respect for others, a oneness of mankind concept, and an integrating relationship of our past -- present -- future.

The organization of the program is based on sound principles of repetition at different levels of maturity, and oh! how wise to bring about learning through such active interaction with the environment--both physical and human.

Can you tell I'm impressed? You can enroll me right now!

Looking forward to seeing you and to continuing this in person. I'll be happy to assist you in any way I can.

Sincerely,

Lois Abeles, Vermont Field Agent
for Education

APPENDIX E

EXTRACTED COMMENTS FROM COMMUNITY RETURNS

It is difficult to assign priorities as each area is important. You have a big task !!!!!

I feel that they should have a dress code, also more discipline.

I believe that since 80% of our local tax dollar goes toward education we must value it highly. I hope we never have to lose sight of the main goal, the youngster themselves.

I believe that your teaching staff should concentrate on the skills that they are trained to teach instead of trying to be psychologists or psychiatrists which in my opinion they are trying to do.

I may be old-fashioned, but I believe since teachers see much more of the children than their parents do, that they should discipline them. The freedom that children get in school makes them have the attitude that they don't have to mind the teacher so they don't have to learn from them. Children need good guidance to give them good guide lines for adult life. Too much freedom leaves them floundering not knowing what's right and what's wrong.

Vocational Education is badly needed at . . . As with most schools, you tend to forget that 1/2 or more don't go to college.

It is my feeling that it is the responsibility of the secondary school to educate the whole student. I would suggest that the tasks be ordered (if possible) for each individual student. Proper educational priorities are very difficult to establish. Loads of luck in your endeavor.

I believe all the listed values are of the greatest importance, and fail to see what importance there is indicating any special priority.

Tasks J, H, and B are ranked above A, C and G because the latter represent language arts, social studies and science areas which are primarily the task of elementary education to be built upon at the secondary level.

These tasks would have a different order of importance depending on the student's goals.

It would be difficult to say one of these are most important as some would not be complete without the other.

Directions for rating are unclear - but the priority tasks I've noted appear to be interdependent.

I think that it is past time for parents to be consulted more fully. This "advice" is a step in the right direction.

Keep out of "MORALS". One man's morality is another's imorality. Schools have no business judging right vs. wrong. I hope you have learned something from the hair and dress fiasco.

If point C is stressed as an overall objective in each of the academic areas - H, E, J don't seem to be pertinent to school areas. These should be areas stressed in homes, guidance offices and psychiatric counselors when the need arrives. Let's stop graduating students who are semi-literate.

We think that if there was more learning the respect of others, less long hair and less physical educational, and work with the parents, and just go to school, learn hard, work, not all this high living. There would be better schooling.

I stress academic subjects - the feedback I hear from college profs and business people alike expresses concern for the lack of student ability to express themselves in written work particularly. Students should be guided if necessary in vocational skills, but I question the ability to have good vocational program and academic program at the same time. Better to have special vocational schools.

More stress on child making some decisions about his education.

You'll find that I was rated a one. Not because of unimportance but because we believe that should be taught in the home. D and E are equally important but can also be taught at home thru games and family adventures or recreation.

I hope by the time students get to . . . they can read and write. Moral integrity and behavior is a responsibility of the home.

#10 = to provide all students with the basic skills necessary for life within the range of each's capabilities. Re: language arts, math, social studies, science, physical education, creative arts, problem solving, decision making. Communications techniques: school should be relevant to life in our present society.

There are not enough . . . graduates seeking higher education. More vocational training is also needed. Many students seem to lack motivation and have or express little enthusiasm for the school and the subjects they take.

#1 and 2 seem to apply to Elementary Education. #10 is Task in a nutshell. Others are all inclusive with #10, on an individually needed basis.

Of course all of these items are important. Overall would not line up as the job of the school.

We all know that children must be able to read and do a certain amount of math. If they do not plan seriously to go on to college I am very much in favor of vocational training.

We think the School is doing a very good job to meet the needs of today's youth. Thanks to all at . . . for the many efforts.